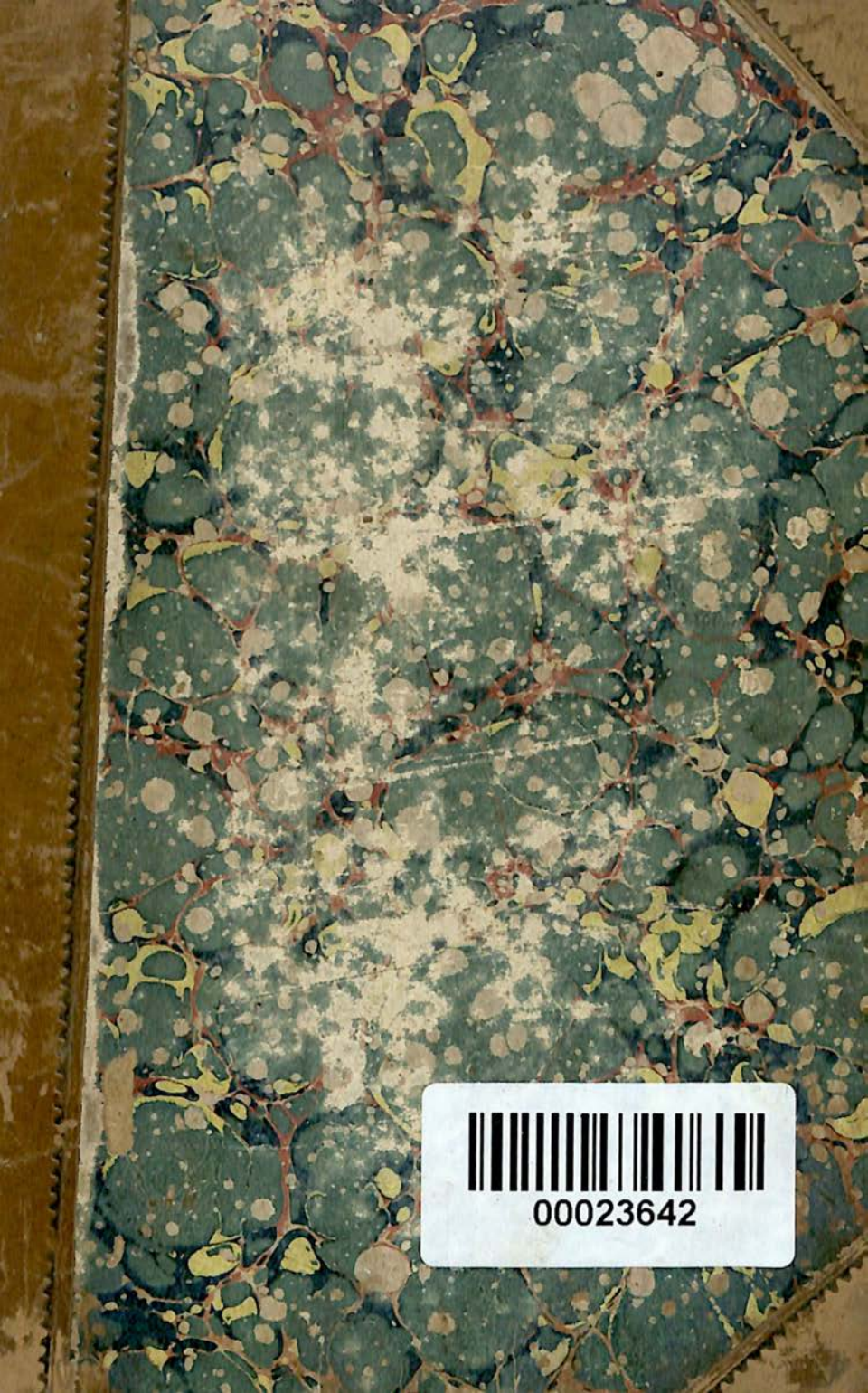
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ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

AND HIS

LITERARY CORRESPONDENTS.

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FOR

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ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE

AND HIS

LITERARY CORRESPONDENTS

A Memorial

BY HIS SON THOMAS CONSTABLE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. III.

EDINBURGH
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SIR ARTHUR HELPS, in his Life of Las Casas, has declared it to be "a fearful consideration, that biographers and the people they write about may some day be brought into each others' presence." Deeply feeling, as I do, the force of this suggestion, it cannot fail to aid my sense of duty in elaborating this most important section of my filial task.

Mr. Lockhart's Memoir of Sir Walter Scott presents a striking biographic instance of consummate skill, while his subject, in breadth and variety of literary interest, transcends all others, certainly for this generation, and perhaps for those that are to come; but although offering a model of excellence hardly to be equalled, it also affords a warning beacon to humble followers. By his treatment of many of the subordinate characters, he has declared his adherence to the axiom of Mark Antony, "The evil that men do lives after them," while willingly accepting the

cruel sequel. James and John Ballantyne, who, the biographer admits,[1] would "have shed their hearts' blood in his service," are described as recklessly plundering their patron, and ruining the man they loved; while Archibald Constable, who proved himself on more than one occasion the faithful friend of all the three, and of whom Mr. Lockhart declares, "Among all his myriad of undertakings, I question if any one that really originated with himself, and continued to be superintended by his own care, ever did fail,"[2] is elsewhere described as a deviser of "mad schemes," and as remorselessly dragging Sir Walter Scott into an abyss created by the extravagant speculations of others.

In the narrative I am about to present to my readers, of the close relations that subsisted between my father and the man we all delight to honour, it shall be my

[1] See Lockhart's Life of Scott, vol. ii. p. 198. The references are all to the *original edition*.

[2] "Often as I may have smiled at the lofty serenity of his self-complacence—I confess I now doubt whether he rated himself too highly as a master in the true science of the bookseller. . . . For casting a keen eye over the remotest indications of popular taste—for anticipating the chances of success or failure in any given variety of adventure—for the planning and invention of his calling—he was not, in his own day at least, surpassed; and among all his myriad of undertakings, I question if any one that really originated with himself, and continued to be superintended by his own care, ever did fail. He was as bold as far-sighted—and his disposition was as liberal as his views were wide. Had he and Scott from the beginning trusted as thoroughly as they understood each other; had there been no third parties to step in, flattering an overweening vanity on the one hand into presumption, and on the other side spurring the enterprise that wanted nothing but a bridle, I have no doubt their joint career might have been one of unbroken prosperity."—See Life, vol. ii. p. 199.

earnest endeavour to do equal justice; and if in aught I may extenuate, I promise that nothing shall be set down in malice. The representatives of Mr. James Ballantyne[1] have vindicated his character, and proved the truth of Sir Walter's manly admission after the crisis of 1826, when he said, "Ballantyne's difficulties, as well as his advantages, are owing to me."[2] For myself, I see no reason to doubt that James Ballantyne might have earned his reputation as the Scottish Baskerville, and that Archibald Constable would have stood in the front rank of his profession, even had they not been privileged to be connected with their illustrious countryman.

I possess no certain indication either of the date or manner of my father's introduction to Sir Walter Scott. My earliest evidence of their correspondence is a short note from the latter in the year 1800; but I think it probable that Mr. Heber or John Leyden may have been the means of making them acquainted. Arrangements for the publication of the first edition of the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border had been already concluded with Messrs. Cadell and Davies. It consisted of two handsome volumes, and appeared in January 1802; a second edition was called for before the close of that year. The Minstrelsy was the first of Scott's works which bore my father's name upon the title-page; he was admitted to a share in the copyright by Messrs. Longman and Rees, by whom, in the summer of 1802, it was acquired for

[1] See two pamphlets called forth by Mr. Lockhart's remarks in the Life of Scott, and a publication entitled The Ballantyne Humbug Handled, which was meant to be a crushing reply to the earlier brochure.

[2] See Life, vol. ii. p. 217.

£500, including a third volume, which appeared under the same auspices in the spring of 1803.

It had been originally Mr. Scott's intention to include 'The Metrical Romance of Sir Tristrem' in the Minstrelsy of the Scottish Border, but he ultimately decided, in spite of the urgent advice of Mr. Ellis, that it should appear separately; and, retaining the copyright in his own hands, he committed the publication of the work to my father, who issued the first edition, limited to 150 copies, in May 1804; a second edition, of 750 copies, appeared in 1806; and a third, of 1000 copies, in 1811. It was in connexion with the printing of this work that James Ballantyne and my father were first brought into correspondence, and from the date of the earliest communication between them—May 31, 1801—Sir Tristrem would appear to have been at least three years in progress before completion.

Mr. Lockhart has represented the feelings mutually entertained by these two men as the reverse of cordial; but although their interest certainly did not always lie in the same direction, I have found few evidences of unfriendliness, while in some of the passages which I shall take occasion to quote from the letters of Mr. Ballantyne, decided contradiction will be afforded to the view that Mr. Lockhart has given. Such confidence had the printer in my father's liberality and good-will, that in 1802 I find him applying for advice as to the charge he ought to make to Cadell and Davies for printing the earlier volumes of the Minstrelsy, and also for a piece of work he had just completed for my father himself. He says, "I annex a note of the expense of printing, which I hope you will

approve. If it is too much,—as yet I walk almost in the dark,—cut off as much as will make it right.[1] . . . I am going to London, in the hope of getting some employment from the booksellers. Might I request you to give me a few letters of introduction to some of them? I am not greatly accustomed to solicitation, and I should wish the asperities of the road to employment smoothed down as much as possible. Any one who has your good report has a good chance to succeed."

My father appears from the first to have taken an active interest in the success of Mr. Ballantyne, and even before he left Kelso had intrusted several publications to his care. It may have been that this was done chiefly to please Mr. Scott, but admirable typography might of itself have amply justified the patronage; and when the printing-office was removed to Edinburgh about the end of 1802, increased facility of intercourse led to improved acquaintance and largely extended business connexion.

The Lay of the Last Minstrel, the plan of which grew out of a Romance of Border Chivalry, which Mr. Lockhart tells us had been designed to form part of the third volume of the Minstrelsy, was published in the first week of January 1805, "and its success," adds the biographer, "at once decided that literature should form the main business of Scott's life."

This first edition of the Lay was an undertaking of Messrs. Longman and Co., in which Constable and Co.

[1] What would a publisher at the present day reply to the following? "The printing of Sir Tristrem will be finished about the end of June: if you approve, it ought to lie two months before it is hot-pressed; and it could be published about the beginning of October"!

were admitted to a fourth share, profits being equally divided with the author. On a second edition being required, Messrs. Longman offered £500 for the copyright of the work, which was accepted, and they afterwards, Mr. Lockhart tells us, added £100, "in their own unsolicited kindness." In 1825 the poem had reached a fourteenth edition, and upwards of 33,000 copies had been circulated.

The next work in which my father was interested along with Mr. Scott was Original Memoirs, written during the Great Civil War; being the Life of Sir Henry Slingsby, and Memoirs of Captain Hodgson, with Notes, etc.[1]

It was on January 30th, 1807, the same day on which

[1] This work was published in the autumn of 1806, and the announcement of the volume called forth a letter from the representative descendant of Sir Henry, to which my father sent the following reply:—

"EDINBURGH, 2*d October* 1806.

"SIR THOMAS,—We have the honour of acknowledging receipt of your letter of 29th ult., and of sending for your inspection and acceptance a copy of the work to which you allude, containing the Memoirs of Sir Henry Slingsby. The history of the publication is shortly this: The late Mr. Ritson, of Gray's Inn, when at Edinburgh, in autumn 1801, put into our hands the MS. from which the Life of Sir Henry and Memoirs of Captain Hodgson have been printed; and the publication was announced in our Scots Magazine so far back as May 1802. Mr. Ritson died early in the year 1803, and before the work went to press. It being our wish to bring the work forward in as respectable a manner as possible, we applied to an eminent literary gentleman, a friend of ours, to superintend the publication. This was undertaken more than twelve months ago, but owing to press of other matters the printer could not overtake the completion of it till about a week ago. The gentleman who did us this favour supplied the seventeen introductory pages, the contents of which, with every other page relating to your ancestor, will, we hope, meet your approbation. This gentleman is at present in the country, and has no pecuniary interest in the publication; nor indeed can we be said to have much ourselves, having printed only about 300 copies, and that number more with a view to preserve his-

they concluded an agreement with Mr. Scott for the Life, Letters, and State Papers of Sir Ralph Sadler,[1] that Archibald Constable and Co. offered for Marmion, very shortly after it had been begun, a sum which startled the literary world, and was accepted, Mr. Lockhart tells us, "without hesitation" by the author.

"DEAR SIR,—We have much pleasure in accepting your new poem, Flodden Field, and not less in agreeing to pay for the same the sum of One Thousand Guineas.

"We propose offering Mr. Miller and Mr. Murray of London one-half of the concern between them; the other we intend to reserve for ourselves, and we trust it will

torical documents than from any profit to be derived from the sale of such limited publications.

"We do not know the source from which Mr. Ritson obtained the MS., and we shall be truly concerned if, on perusal of the volume, you should find it contain a single sentence derogatory to the character of your ancestor, or to give you the smallest offence.

"We have not yet circulated six copies of the book, and shall order the publication to be stopped till we hear from you again; in the meantime, your letter shall be transmitted to our friend in the country, who, we have no doubt, will be ready to communicate with you on the subject.—We have the honour to be, Sir Thomas, your most obedient humble servants, A. CONSTABLE AND CO.

"Sir Thos. Slingsby, Bart., Scriven Park."

[1] Published in 1809, in 3 vols. 4to, and the terms on which it was undertaken by Mr. Scott are contained in the following extract from the letter of agreement:—"We are to pay you one hundred guineas for arranging the papers for the press, writing an account of the life of Sir Ralph, and such Notes and Illustrations as you may think necessary. We are also to furnish you with the various collections of State Papers and Histories of the period to which the book relates; the books so furnished to remain your property; and further, in the event of the publication coming to a second edition, you are to be entitled to fifty guineas additional."

remain for ever in the hands of Edinburgh booksellers, for the honour and glory of Scotland. Payment of the copy-money shall be made to suit your convenience and wishes.—We remain, etc., A. CONSTABLE AND Co."

The offer of one fourth share of this copyright was gratefully accepted, both by Mr. Miller of Albemarle Street and Mr. Murray, the latter of whom wrote as follows to my father:—

"I am truly sensible of the kind remembrance of me in your liberal purchase. You have rendered Mr. Miller no less happy by your admission of him, and we both view it as honourable, profitable, and glorious to be concerned in the publication of a new poem by Walter Scott."

In February 1808 Marmion made its appearance, and was hailed with almost unanimous approbation.[1]

[1] The following account of its commercial history, so far at least as circulation is concerned, is quoted from Mr. Lockhart's Life of the author, and may be presumed to be correct, though I regret that an opportunity has not been afforded me of verifying such matters by reference to the books of my father's firm:—"Marmion was first printed in a splendid quarto, price one guinea and a half. The 2000 copies of this edition were all disposed of in less than a month, when a second, of 3000 copies, in 8vo, was sent to press. There followed a third and a fourth edition, each of 3000, in 1809; a fifth, of 2000, early in 1810; and a sixth, of 3000, in two volumes, crown 8vo, with twelve designs by Singleton, before the end of that year; a seventh, of 4000, and an eighth, of 5000 copies 8vo, in 1811; a ninth, of 3000, in 1815; a tenth, of 500, in 1820; an eleventh of 500, and a twelfth, of 2000 copies, in foolscap, both in 1825. The legitimate sale in this country, therefore, down to the time of its being included in the first collective edition of his Poetical Works, amounted to 31,000; and the aggregate of that sale down to the period at which I am writing (May 1836), may be stated at 50,000 copies."—See Life, vol. ii. p. 158.

The notice of the poem in the Edinburgh Review,[1] although giving high and cordial praise to some passages, was so unsparing in condemnation of others, and of the conception and general structure, that it gave deep offence to Mr. Scott, while it must have been at once disappointing and distasteful to my father—publisher both of the poem and of the critique. It was certainly calculated to increase and develop Scott's hostility to the political principles advocated by Mr. Jeffrey, who was himself the acknowledged author of the article in question, and who touched the poet at a very tender point when he accused him of "neglect of Scottish feelings and Scottish character." There is little doubt that the establishment of the London Quarterly Review was helped forward by this paper in the Edinburgh, as much at least as the alleged incivility of Mr. Hunter led to the establishment of the publishing house of John Ballantyne and Company. Scott says, "Constable, or rather that Bear his partner, has behaved to me of late not very civilly, and I owe Jeffrey a flap with a fox-tail on account of his review on Marmion; and thus doth the whirligig of Time bring about my revenges."[2]

In the year 1808, besides Marmion, my father published the Autobiographic Memoirs of Captain George Carleton, and Memoirs of Robert Carey, Earl of Monmouth, in separate 8vo volumes, each having a Preface and Notes by Mr. Scott, whose name also appeared on the title-page of Strutt's unfinished romance of Queenhoo-Hall, which

[1] No. xxiii., April 1808.

[2] See Life, vol. ii. p. 218; Nov. 17, 1808.

was edited by Scott and published by John Murray. It was also in this year that my father concluded an arrangement with Mr. Scott for the Life and Works of Jonathan Swift, and Mr. Lockhart tells us that he offered £1500 for the labour involved in the undertaking. His account of the origin of this enterprise is as follows:—

"Scott's engagements with London publishers respecting the Somers and the Sadler, were, I believe, entered into before the end of 1807; but Constable appears to have first ascertained them, when he accompanied the second cargo of Marmion to the great southern market; and, alarmed at the prospect of losing his hold on Scott's industry, he at once invited him to follow up his Dryden by an edition of Swift on the same scale,—offering, moreover, to double the rate of payment which he had contracted for with the London publisher of the Dryden; that is to say, to give him £1500 for the new undertaking. This munificent tender was accepted without hesitation; and as early as May 1808, I find Scott writing to his literary allies in all directions for books, pamphlets, and MS. materials likely to be serviceable in completing and illustrating the Life and Works of the Dean of St. Patrick's."[1]

Mr. Lockhart is doubtless correct in attributing this proposal to my father; although from the following letter to Messrs. Constable and Co. it might have been made by Mr. Scott:—

"EDINBURGH, 25*th July* 1808.

"GENTLEMEN,—Being about to compile and edite a complete edition of Swift's Works, in nineteen or twenty volumes 8vo, with a Life of the Author, and Notes critical and illustrative of his writings, upon the same plan with my late edition of Dryden, I hereby offer you the said work, in property, so far as the same may belong to me

[1] See Life, vol. ii. p. 170.

by statute or common law, for the sum of £1500 sterling —£500 of which to be payable during the currency of the work, as I may require, and the remaining £1000 to be settled by bills at six, twelve, and eighteen months' date, in equal sums, to be dated and granted on the day of publication.

"And in case of my death before the completing of this work, I agree, in that case, that it shall be referred to Francis Jeffrey, Esq., what proportion, or whether any part, of the said copy-money shall be payable to my representatives, to be judged according to the progress of the work and the equity of the case; and the work, so far as depends upon me, shall be ready for publication about Christmas 1810.—I am, Gentlemen, your very obedient Servant, (Signed) WALTER SCOTT."[1]

So numerous and onerous, however, were Mr. Scott's engagements, that the publication was only effected in

[1] This letter was accompanied by the following prospectus in the handwriting of Mr. Scott:—"Swift's Works, edited by Walter Scott, Esq., with a Life of the Author, Notes Critical and Illustrative, etc. etc. The present edition of Swift's Works contains upwards of an hundred original Letters, Essays, and Poems, by Dean Swift, recovered either from manuscript copies or rare pamphlets and loose sheets, none of which have hitherto been printed with his works. In particular, the letters between the Dean and Miss Vanhomrigh, so long suppressed, or published only in a mutilated state, are now presented to the public in a more perfect state, and furnish some light on that mysterious part of Swift's private history. Many of the Dean's compositions already published have been also corrected and enlarged, by comparing them with the original copies. The Life has been compiled from the separate narratives of former biographers collated with original documents, and some critical observations and historical notes accompany the various productions of this incomparable English classic."

1814, before which date a memorable breach between the distinguished author and his publishers had occurred and been repaired, reconciliation having been brought about by means which must have tended to increase his confidence in my father's commercial wisdom, and also in his goodwill.

It was at Whitsunday 1805 that Mr. Scott entered on the partnership with James Ballantyne, which Mr. Lockhart admits a suspicion that he already had in view when he advised the removal of his friend to Edinburgh. The success of this new firm was brilliant and immediate; for its typography was excellent, and the patronage secured by the influence of the great unknown and also unsleeping partner was extensive and commanding. "He had, long before this, cast a shrewd and penetrating eye over the field of literary enterprise, and developed in his own mind the outlines of many extensive plans, which wanted nothing but the command of a sufficient body of able subalterns to be carried into execution with splendid success."[1] In this sentence I believe we have a key to the train of events which issued in the establishment of the publishing house of John Ballantyne and Co.

It was not unnatural that Scott should feel annoyed at the unsparing notice of Marmion in the Edinburgh Review, but in regard to this he and his publisher were companions in misfortune, and fellow-feeling tends proverbially to kindness, not to disunion. Mr. Hunter is said to have been rude, but what was the actual head and

[1] See Life, vol. ii. p. 42.

front of his offending I have been unable to discover; what were the "certain impertinences which, in the vehemence of their Whiggery" Mr. Scott says "Messrs. Constable and Co. have dared to indulge in towards me," I do not know; nor shall I stop here to inquire into the alleged tyranny of my father over Henry Weber, whose "incompetence" and "presumption" are recorded by Mr. Lockhart, and abundantly attested by the works which he presumed to edit and to annotate.

The vehement Whiggery of Constable and Co. had only lately become obnoxious to Mr. Scott. In Mr. Hunter's journal kept during a visit to London in the spring of 1807, there is the following entry:—"*April* 18. Went to breakfast at Murray's as usual, and returned home very soon afterwards to meet with Walter Scott, who had intimated a visit to us,[1] and came accordingly. We had a deal of very friendly and agreeable conversation with him, both about the Review and other matters. He surprised us by telling us he had been defending us, and fighting our battle valiantly in the higher, or rather *ministerial* circles. I believe he alluded to our being attacked as violent oppositionists, and our shop as a great depot for the whole party. I afterwards went along with him to call for Mr. Brougham."

Mr. Scott was bent on becoming a publisher, and in the Messrs. Ballantyne he believed he had found the coadjutors who were needed to insure success. Able men they both were, but neither of them had been educated

[1] Mr. Constable had joined Mr. Hunter in London at this time.

in that most delicate of crafts; and reverence for their friend and patron may often have restrained them from strongly objecting to enterprises recommended by him, even when these were such as they could not approve. That Scott was principally responsible for the quality of the undertakings of the firm there cannot be a doubt; and Mr. Lockhart tells us that when "the publishing firm was as yet little more than a twelvemonth old, James began to apprehend that some of their mightiest undertakings would wholly disappoint Scott's prognostications." [1]

The condition of the firm in 1813, within four years after its establishment, is fairly stated by Mr. Lockhart [2] in the following passage:—

"I have already, perhaps, said enough to account for the general want of success in this publishing adventure; but Mr. James Ballantyne sums up the case so briefly in his death-bed paper, that I may here quote his words. 'My brother,' he says, 'though an active and pushing, was not a cautious bookseller, and the large sums received never formed an addition to his stock. In fact, they were all expended by the partners, who, being then young and sanguine men, not unwillingly adopted my brother's hasty results. By May 1813, in a word, the absolute throwing away of our own most valuable publications, and the rash adoption of some injudicious speculations of Mr. Scott, had introduced such losses and embarrassments, that after a very careful consideration, Mr. Scott determined to dissolve the concern.' He adds—'This became a matter of less difficulty, because time had in a great measure worn away the differences between Mr. Scott and Mr. Constable, and Mr. Hunter was now out of Constable's concern. A peace, therefore, was speedily made up, and the old habits of intercourse were restored.'

"How reluctantly Scott had made up his mind to open such a

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[1] See Life, vol. ii. p. 331.

[2] See Life, vol. iii. p. 56-58.

negotiation with Constable as involved a complete exposure of the mismanagement of John Ballantyne's business as a publisher, will appear from a letter dated about the Christmas of 1812, in which he says to James, who had proposed asking Constable to take a share both in Rokeby and in the Annual Register, 'You must be aware, that in stating the objections which occur to me to taking in Constable, I think they ought to give way either to absolute necessity or to very strong grounds of advantage. But I *am* persuaded nothing ultimately good can be expected from any connexion with that house, unless for those who have a mind to be hewers of wood and drawers of water. We will talk the matter coolly over, and in the meanwhile, perhaps, you could see W. Erskine, and learn what impression this odd union is like to make among your friends. Erskine is sound-headed, and quite to be trusted with *your whole story*. I must own I can hardly think the purchase of the Register is equal to the loss of credit and character which your surrender will be conceived to infer.' At the time when he wrote thus, Scott no doubt anticipated that Rokeby would have success not less decisive than the Lady of the Lake; but in this expectation—though 10,000 copies in three months would have seemed to any other author a triumphant sale—he had been disappointed. And meanwhile the difficulties of the firm, accumulating from week to week, had reached, by the middle of May, a point which rendered it absolutely necessary for him to conquer all his scruples."

Mr. Cadell says, in his Memoranda—

"Prior to this time the reputation of John Ballantyne and Co. had been decidedly on the decline. It was notorious in the trade that their general speculations had been unsuccessful; they were known to be grievously in want of money. These rumours were realized to the full by an application which Messrs. B. made to Mr. Constable in May 1813, for pecuniary aid, accompanied by an offer of some of the books they had published since 1809, as a purchase, along with various shares in Mr. Scott's own poems. Their difficulties were admitted, and the negotiation was pressed urgently; so much so, that a pledge was given, that if the terms asked were acceded to, John Ballantyne and Co. would endeavour to wind up their concerns, and cease as soon as possible to be publishers."[1]

[1] See Life, vol. iii. p. 57.

With reference to the application here alluded to, my father wrote as follows from Pitcaithly, on June 17 :—

"I have been deliberating on the subject of Mr. Scott's proposals, and have no sort of wish to be rapid in being either *off* or *on*. I must write to him, however, in a day or two, and shall enclose the letter for your perusal and approbation.

"We have very heavy engagements, but I trust no bad speculations in hand; all of them by prudence, perseverance, and industry will be got the better of. I feel the less alarmed at their amount—though certainly with some regret—when I reflect that at least one-third of it is for profits of past years. Times are changed, no doubt, but our trade is not worse, nor is our management less praiseworthy."

The letter to Mr. Scott had not been quite satisfactory, and on the 21st June my father wrote again to his partner in the following terms :—"I have to mention the receipt of a letter from Mr. Scott which rather perplexes me. It is a long one of three pages, which I must read oftener than once before sending it to you. You may expect the original to-morrow; in the meantime, I may state that my letter of yesterday will do no harm, and is no bar in the way to a suitable reply to the present. He makes two distinct propositions, and adds that in the event of neither being accepted, he must apply to Longman and Co. and Murray."

Mr. Lockhart continues :—

"The most important of the requests which the labouring house made to Constable was, that he should forthwith take entirely to himself the stock, copyright, and future management of the Edinburgh Annual Register. Upon examining the state of this book, however, Constable found that the loss on it had never been less than £1000 per annum, and he therefore declined that matter for the present. He promised, however, to consider seriously the means he might have of ultimately relieving them from the pressure of the Register, and in the meantime offered to take 300 sets of the stock on hand. The other purchases he finally made on the 18th of May, were considerable portions of Weber's unhappy Beaumont and Fletcher—of an edition of De Foe's novels in twelve volumes—of a collection entitled Tales of the East, in three large volumes 8vo, double-columned—and of another in one volume, called Popular Tales—about 800 copies of the Vision of Don Roderick—and a fourth of the remaining copyright of Rokeby, price £700. The immediate accommodation thus received amounted to £2000."

Mr. Cadell says:—

"These and after purchases of books from the stock of J. Ballantyne and Co. were resold to the trade by Constable's firm at less than one-half and one-third of the prices at which they were thus obtained."[1]

It was not unnatural that Mr. Scott should feel some awkwardness in thus soliciting the good offices of my father, especially with reference to the Edinburgh Annual Register, the plan of which, as is proved by Mr. Hunter's letter to my father[2] of March 25th, 1807, had been originally propounded as a project to be undertaken by Constable and Co. Affairs had now, however, assumed so serious an aspect that it was necessary to sacrifice dignity at the shrine of necessity, and to restore the scaffolding which my father is represented as having prematurely ventured to kick down.[3]

[1] See Life, note at p. 59, vol. iii.

[2] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 119.

[3] See Life, vol. ii. p. 215.

Strenuous efforts were now made to reduce stock and liabilities, and Mr. Lockhart admits[1] that

"Whatever success these endeavours met with, appears to have been due either directly or indirectly to Mr. Constable, who did a great deal more than prudence would have warranted, in taking on himself the results of unhappy adventures,—and, by his sagacious advice, enabled the distressed partners to procure similar assistance at the hands of others, who did not partake his own feelings of personal kindness and sympathy. 'I regret to learn,' Scott writes to him on the 16th October, 'that there is great danger of your exertions in our favour, which once promised so fairly, proving finally abortive, or at least being too tardy in their operation to work out our relief. If anything more can be honourably and properly done to avoid a most unpleasant shock, I shall be most willing to do it; if not—God's will be done! There will be enough of property, including my private fortune, to pay every claim; and I have not used prosperity so ill as greatly to fear adversity. But these things we will talk over at meeting; meanwhile believe me, with a sincere sense of your kindness and friendly views, very truly yours, W.S.'"

Mr. Lockhart tells us that within a month after the arrangement concluded with Constable on the 18th of May, Mr. Scott was pressed for money to complete the purchase of an addition to his estate, and had offered the publisher, for £5000, the copyright of an unwritten poem.[2]

In the month of August, by desire of Mr. Scott, Messrs. Ballantyne laid a statement of the affairs of their Company before my father; and I shall here quote some letters which disclose the extent to which his services appear to have been effectual in relieving them from their embarrassments. The following letter from Mr. Scott is in reply to one received, of which I have no copy:—

"ABBOTSFORD, *23d August* 1813.

"DEAR SIR,—I suspect James Ballantyne has alarmed

[1] See Life, vol. iii. p. 90.

[2] *Ibid.* vol. iii. p. 63.

you somewhat more than was necessary with the late communication which he made. The truth is, my own affairs are in very good order, and I have no doubt of retrieving those of John Ballantyne and Co., with management. But I wrote to John in great wrath at a late blunder of his, and should have prepared myself, had I met the creditors of the house, to put matters in a good train of settlement. The fact is, that, with my own resources, a temporary credit of from £2000 to £4000 would amply suffice to put these matters out of all danger. Even the smaller sum, if it could be raised this or next month, would very well answer, because I have every reason to expect considerable remittances during the months of November and December. I wish you would look into the state of the affairs and satisfy yourself about them, and James will show you a long letter I wrote to him this morning on the subject.

"If you could oblige us with procuring the temporary assistance wanted, you should fix the price of the next poem yourself. I would be obliged, however, to reserve a half for Longman and Murray, betwixt them. I mean to go to press in November, when I should expect acceptances for £2000, leaving the balance to be accepted for when the work was finished. If this can be done, I should want no further accommodation than a credit for £2000, betwixt September and November;—if the sale could not be so adjusted, £4000 would be necessary. I am not so low in purse as I suffer John Ballantyne to suppose, having always kept about £400 or £500 by me for a pinch, and my very considerable income is paid

quarterly. If I speak to any of my wealthy friends, I must explain the whole business. I should startle them to a certainty, and probably blow up the whole business. But if you can set your shoulder to mine, to the extent of £2000, advanced in such sums as may be necessary, and at six months' date, we could deposit with you the copyrights on security, and also the copyright of the new poem. If your London banker would accept our joint security for such a sum as £2000 or £3000, this would do still better. I rather undervalue my property of various kinds, exclusive of these copyrights and stock, when I reckon my house, farm, freehold, money lent, and library, at £10,000, so you would be pretty snug with all the stock and copyrights to boot; and my own interest with the banks being good, I could easily get cash for your acceptances, while I should think the idea of your being to get another poem would account for these being in my hands without prejudice to your own credit. How far, however, your situation will permit you to embroil yourself in other people's matters is a very different question, and, be assured, I should be the last person to press you so to do, though I am fully conscious that the temporary inconvenience is the only evil that can befall you. As for the sum of £5000 or £6000, I have not the least occasion for more than two-thirds of it at the very utmost, and one-third will fully supply my wants. I shall always have the deepest sense of the interest you have taken in this troublesome affair, and am very truly yours,

"WALTER SCOTT."

To this letter my father replied as follows:—

"EDINBURGH, 24*th August* 1813.

"DEAR SIR,—I was this morning favoured with your letter of yesterday, and Messrs. Ballantyne have just now left me, after a long interview on the subject of their affairs. I have not yet seen statements, but Mr. John Ballantyne has promised to lay them before me without delay, when I shall be truly happy to find reason to alter the opinion which Mr. James Ballantyne transmitted to you on Sunday. On the subject of this house coming under acceptance at present, I am obliged explicitly to assure you that our doing so might be attended with the most injurious consequences to our own credit. Regarding your private fortune, influence, and resources, believe me I have no doubt; but you are not in the midst of the mercantile world, and cannot therefore be so fully aware of the present, and I may add increasing, difficulties in money-negotiations, as I am, or I am convinced you would feel completely aware of the necessity of a great exertion being very speedily made to secure a large sum of money independent of your present and ordinary business resources; and I again repeat my opinion, that your connexion with and interest in the business of Ballantyne and Co. makes this a measure of absolute necessity. A partial sum of £1000 this month, a similar sum next, and so on, would keep you in constant trouble. They might be managed through the banks here for a time; but allow me to impress upon you that the risks are greater than you may at present estimate, and I need not add, the consequences which might follow an interruption to them.

Changes of an unlooked-for nature have taken place in the arrangements of this house;[1] but, thank God, its credit has stood firm, and every day I live increases the necessity and my anxiety for its preservation. If these and many other considerations, with which I need not trouble you at present, put it in my power to embark my credit in raising the sums you mention, it would afford me the greatest pleasure to do so, but I am sure you would not expect me to endanger my own safety. I am sincere when I assure you that I will serve you in everything within my power, but the only effectual means which occurs to me for your immediate relief, is the support of one or two of your wealthy friends, in guaranteeing a London account, which I think I could, with almost certain success, recommend to our own bankers: on commercial paper I am convinced it would not be practicable at this time. Any stoppage in the house of Ballantyne and Co. would be calamitous in many points of view, and this I am sure you have many friends to assist in preventing. I have only time to assure you again how truly I am your faithful friend and servant,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

MR. SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, 24*th August* 1813.

"MY DEAR SIR,—It is odd, that yesterday, while con-

[1] My father here refers to the secession and death of his partner Mr. Alexander Gibson Hunter, and to the death of Mr. Robert Cathcart, who had taken Mr. Hunter's place in the firm of A. Constable and Co.

sidering the plan which you suggested, it never occurred to me that I *have one* friend of the most undoubted responsibility, who, I think and believe, from the habits upon which we have long lived, will guarantee my credit to a London banker for a twelvemonth to the extent of £4000, and farther credit, considering what I have in Scotland, would be unnecessary. I have written to him to-day, and shall have an answer by Tuesday, and I so confidently anticipate its being favourable that I think you may propose the matter to your friendly banker in London without very great chance of the plan proving abortive by the non-accession of the Duke of Buccleuch, whom I would propose as my guarantee. Of course, the more simple the security could be made, the less trouble would it give his Grace, and if a simple letter of guarantee would be admitted, so much the better. The time presses, and John, from an odd and habitual reluctance to say the worst, is apt not to intimate his wants till the last pinch, which has, in one or two cases, given me great displeasure; but quarrelling would avail nothing at present, so that the sooner the necessary arrangements can be made so much the better. I really have little doubt of the Duke's acquiescence. I have acted as godfather to his last child, and been considered in all respects as an intimate and valued connexion of the family, and he has the true spirit of a Border chief,

> 'To be a hedge about his friends,
> A heckle to his foes.'

"I trust to have his answer by Tuesday; meanwhile you can ascertain the disposition of your banker. This, if

the Duke accedes, will do much better than any idea of implicating you, and will leave time to think of a new poem at leisure, and at a more fortunate juncture. If you write to London on receipt of this you may have an answer by Wednesday or Thursday, before which time you will be in possession of the Duke's answer to my proposal. I have not gone further into particulars than mentioning my wish to have a credit to the above extent, to enable me to prevent my copyrights from being hastily disposed of, and to avoid the consequent loss. It is unnecessary, I presume, to be particular to the banker about these matters.

"When this affair is in a prospect of arrangement, which I trust will be next week, I have to request, as a particular favour, that you will spare me a day here with the Ballantynes, that I may explain these matters more fully, which I am desirous should be in their presence. I would come to town for this purpose, but it would interrupt Swift; besides, I wish you to see this place, and am very desirous to thank you under my own roof for the deep interest you have taken in these unfortunate affairs.

"If your London Shylock wants a pound of flesh, it will fall to James Ballantyne's lot to find it, for my proposed noble surety never had an ounce, and John Ballantyne as little, and I have dwindled sadly under these trivets and frights. I think you will be pleased with what I have done, and am very sincerely yours, "W. SCOTT."

The reply of the Duke of Buccleuch to Mr. Scott's

application was immediate and affirmative;[1] and so confidently had my father also anticipated this result, that on the 25th August he wrote as follows, to Mr. Scott and to Messrs. Brooks, Son, and Dixon, bankers in London:—

"EDINBURGH, *25th August* 1813.

"DEAR SIR,—I have yours of yesterday, and feel much pleased at its contents. I have written to Messrs. Brooks, Son, and Dixon by this post, and have no doubt of a favourable result. I should think a simple letter of guarantee from the Duke enough, but these moneyed people generally require a legal form; if so, they will state what that is in their reply.

"I am quite glad that you have adopted my suggestion, as the matter can be so respectably and quietly managed. I will come and see you any time you like, but it is in no shape necessary to go back on things of old; however, anything within my power to assist in putting matters to rights may be depended on.—I am, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

"EDINBURGH, *25th August* 1813.

"GENTLEMEN,—Our friend Mr. Walter Scott, whose fame must be known to you, will have occasion to make considerable payments in London during the next twelve months, and is desirous of opening an account on a principle similar to that which we have with your house, on a sufficient guarantee. The credit he might require is four thousand pounds, never putting you in advance, but re-

[1] See Life, vol. iii. p. 79.

mitting to pay his drafts. Mr. Scott's security would be his Grace the Duke of Buccleuch and Queensberry, which, we need not add, is the first that could be offered in this country. We have taken the liberty of recommending your house to Mr. Scott, and we write at his request to ascertain whether such would be agreeable to you. Mr. Scott possesses a good estate, with a clear income besides of upwards of £2000 per annum, and will conduct his transactions on the strictest principles of business. We need not add that we should consider the account as in every way respectable and safe.

"In the event of this matter meeting your approbation, and should you have no man of business here, we should take the liberty of suggesting our particular friend Mr. James Gibson as a proper person. Mr. Gibson is agent in Edinburgh for the Bank of England, and a man of the first professional respectability.—We are, etc.,

"A. CONSTABLE AND CO."

MESSRS. BROOKS, SON, AND DIXON to MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND CO.

"CHANCERY LANE, *28th August* 1813.

"GENTLEMEN,—We are favoured with yours of the 25th inst., and feel ourselves obliged by your friendly recommendation. We shall have no objection to open an acct. with your friend Mr. Scott upon the same terms on which we transact business for you, provided he possesses us with bills, or nearly so, to cover our acceptance, so that the guarantee you mention shall be considered only as a col-

lateral security. In short, we wish it to be understood that we should not like to accept for any person to the extent you mention without having something in our possession which would be convertible into money in a reasonable time.

"In the present instance we beg leave to say that we have the fullest confidence in what you have stated respecting Mr. Scott's responsibility, and if the nature of his dealings here will occasion his having bills to lodge with us, though at a longer date than may be immediately convertible (as in your own concerns), we shall have great pleasure in commencing a correspondence with him.

"In your next you will perhaps throw a little further light upon the subject, and if the guarantee proposed is taken, we should be glad to leave it to you to employ your own professional friend to carry it into effect.—We are, etc., BROOKS, SON, AND DIXON."

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. SCOTT.

"EDINBURGH, 26*th August* 1813.

"Mr. John Ballantyne brought me an extended statement of the affairs of both concerns yesterday, which I have gone over with considerable attention; but after all I cannot be certain that the abstract which I shall now give you is so satisfactory as I could wish. As to the printing house and materials I could only guess at them, but of the value of the books and copyrights I should believe I have formed a pretty near estimate as follows:—

Stock of Books, Copyrights on hand, etc., £18,314, may produce	£8,600	0	0
Debts due to the Concern, £3846, may produce	1,500	0	0
Debt due by the Printing-office,	5,640	0	0
	£15,740	0	0

Debts due to the Bookselling concern, besides stock and your advances, appear to be as follows—

Accepted Bills due from 1st Sept. to April next,	£10,750	0	0
Bank Credits,	1,000	0	0
Open Accounts,	976	0	0
	£12,726	0	0

Printing Concern.

Both Printing-houses, £2450—materials must have cost a large sum, at a guess say worth at the present time £1550; together	£4,000	0	0
Debts due to this business, £1307, chiefly for work in progress, say may produce	1,000	0	0
	£5,000	0	0

Against which, besides partners' stock accounts, this business is due—

To the Bookselling concern,	£5,640	0	0	
Bank Credits,	1,800	0	0	
Mr. Scotland, Bond,	425	0	0	
Sundry Accounts,	320	0	0	
				£8,185 0 0

I have now to state the amount to be made good by absolute engagements—

Accepted Bills (these all payable within six months),	£10,750	0	0
Open Accounts,	976	0	0
Bank Accts., Printing-office,	1,800	0	0
Ditto, Bookselling concern (these accounts may be kept open occasionally, matters being quietly managed),	1,000	0	0
Sundry Accts. due by Printing-office,	320	0	0
Bond to Mr. Scotland,	425	0	0
	£15,271	0	0

Now, this is certainly a large sum of money, but it appears to me that by good management the following may be brought in the course of time to meet it:—

Books and Copyrights, according to the estimation I have been able to make of them, . .	£8,600	0	0
Debts due to the Bookselling concern, calculated to produce	1,500	0	0
Printing-houses, etc., ...	4,000	0	0
Debts due to Printing concern, calculated to produce	1,000	0	0
	£15,100	0	0

But near as these funds may come to cover the engagements, I have no sort of idea that they can be realized in anything like time for the acceptances. The Book-property can only be disposed of by a sale to the trade, or other regular means; it consists of heavy articles, which will require both skill and management to make them produce my valuation perhaps after all. When and how this most desirable end should be brought about must be the subject of after deliberation.

"I have every reason to expect a favourable reply to my London letter, which will help much; but still, some further and almost immediate supplies will be necessary. I wish, my dear Sir, I could have sent you a less vexatious view of these matters, but I am sure you will rather be pleased to know their extent, and that in valuing the property I have estimated everything at what I really think it will produce, leaving out of view every consideration of original cost.

"As soon as I hear from London perhaps you may wish to see me in the country. I beg you will just say what

will be agreeable to you in this respect, and my time shall be yours.—Being always with respect most faithfully yours, A. C."

MR. SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, MELROSE, *28th August* 1813.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged by your friendly communication, which is not very different from what I apprehended would prove the practical view of these affairs. But I think the copyrights and debts may both turn out better than your state holds out. We will, however, abide by your valuation as our rule of conduct for the present, which will prevent disappointments. I do not anticipate any great difficulty in clearing all quietly and creditably if the Duke comes forward, and your bankers are, as they say, agreeable. Our immediately applicable funds will then stand thus:—

I furnish, month of Sept., . .	£750	0	0		
Oct. and Nov., ...	800	0	0		
Dec., from £500 to £1000—say .	750	0	0		
				£2300	0 0
Bills presumed to be discountable in the above period, . . .	£1500	0	0		
Cash-credit, say	3500	0	0		
				£7300	0 0

"With this provision we can go on very well till the New Year, for every payment is clearing the credit of the Company, and if no sales can be made, which I apprehend will prove the case, a few hundreds might be raised at the banks until spring—the difference between the provision and demands cannot, I think, exceed from £600 to

£1000, which will be then all that we need in the Edinburgh money-market. After the New Year about £4000 is due, to which may be added £1000, which I shall need, to be repaid between Dec. and May. Against this sum of £5000 we have debts and receipts of printing-house, and I think I can promise to replace £1000 at Whity., by which period we will be clear of all acceptances and open accompts if we have anything like John's usual success in collecting debts—at any rate, the floating balance cannot well exceed £2000. In this case ample time will be afforded to dispose of the stock and copyrights at the most favourable period. For, when the pressure is over, we can lie on our oars very quietly for a time. I can say with some comfort that if your state is realized, the loss will be severe, but not by any means intolerable, and I will certainly endeavour to maintain the printing-house, which is a profitable concern, until some other partner shall cast up for James, which would save probably a thousand or two. It produces about £1800 a year, which is not to be rashly parted with.

"I am very anxious about my answer from the Duke. If it be as I expect, his shoulders are broad enough to bear me through a deeper stream. The vexation to me in this business has been John's sanguine temper, who perpetually fixed some point when he hoped to get on well, and as regularly disappointed me—something like the spoiled children in Princes Street, whose maids have to carry them twenty or thirty yards in hopes they will then be able to walk, when behold, whenever they are set down, the rickety brats roar louder than ever, and will not budge a step.

"I will be most happy to see you when you have your answer from the bankers, which will, I presume, be on Thursday or Friday. But I will write the instant I have the Duke's reply.—Yours truly, W. SCOTT."

At this stage in our narrative Messrs. Longman and Co. were once more in the ascendant as my father's London coadjutors. So early as October 1808 we are told that an "alliance, offensive and defensive," had been formed with Mr. Murray,[1] who had for some time previously been acting energetically in concert with A. Constable and Co., to their mutual advantage. Mr. Scott's dissatisfaction with that firm, and more especially with the principles advocated by the Edinburgh Review, had not been unnoticed by the London publisher, and, as Mr. Lockhart says, it was not wonderful that a young bookseller, conscious of ample energies, should have watched with eagerness the circumstances which seemed not unlikely to place within his own reach a more intimate connexion with the first great living author in whose works he had ever had any direct concern. The terms of intimacy on which Mr. Murray had been until lately with my father's firm, incline me to substitute "interest" for "eagerness" as the feeling with which he may have legitimately regarded the aspect at this time of the relations of Constable and Co. with Mr. Scott. He had taken no part in the events that led to it, and it was not unnatural that he should avail himself of the opportunity thereby afforded of a more direct connexion with so distinguished

[1] See Life, vol. ii. p. 247.

an author; but this unexpected revolution of the wheel of Fortune lends a key for the explanation of a misunderstanding that arose between Archibald Constable and Company and their friend in Albemarle Street. It was during a visit which Murray paid to Scott at Ashestiel in October 1808 that the establishment of the London Quarterly was determined on, and Mr. Murray's valuable aid bespoken in carrying out the plan of starting a publishing firm in Edinburgh with political views more consonant than those of Constable and Co.

The Quarterly Review, as all men know, had distinguished success, but the friendly alliance between Mr. Murray and the Messrs. Ballantyne terminated abruptly within the period predicted by Mr. Hunter in his letter to my father of 31st May 1809,[1] and in a manner that left no door of reconciliation. I have elsewhere adduced evidence that the friendship of Mr. Murray and my father survived, though it must have staggered beneath the shock of opposing interests; but the loss of Mr. Murray's active and effective service doubtless led to the establishment in London, by A. Constable and Co., of the firm of Constable, Hunter, Park, and Hunter, which after a brief existence was dissolved, in consequence of the death of Mr. Park, the only efficient man who could be spared to superintend it.

In these circumstances another coalition became desirable, and was once more effected with Messrs. Longman. After my father's reconciliation with Mr. Scott

[1] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 139.

in 1813, he wrote as follows to that firm on 4th September:—

"DEAR SIRS,—I have just returned from a visit to Abbotsford,[1] and address you at Mr. Scott's request.

"You are aware that Mr. Scott has retained shares in the copyrights of the Lady of the Lake and Rokeby, besides holding an interest in some of the most considerable undertakings of Ballantyne and Co., which he wishes by and bye to dispose of; but in the meantime the command of a sum of money would be of great service in comfortably bringing these matters to a conclusion. At

[1] In compliance with Mr. Scott's invitation, my father visited Abbotsford, and while still there received the following communication from his partner, written at the urgent instance of their warmest, steadiest, and most prudent friend, Mr. Gibson, afterwards Sir James Gibson-Craig, Bart. :—

"EDINBURGH, 2*d Septem.* 1813.

"MY DEAR SIR,—You, I daresay, will be surprised at this letter, but I have just had a long interview with a good friend, J. G., who desires me to write; if it is too late I cannot help it, but I am sorry to say he disapproves entirely of the Longman and Co. security on our part, and most strenuously and earnestly advises that you do nothing till you come to town, and the matter is talked over with some of our friends. His opinion is founded solely on our own safety, for I grieve to say that the main matter is talked of, and he has heard of it from several quarters, and his opinion is that all must come out soon. You are quite aware of his gloom on the subject, I know, and it weighs with me to a considerable extent; for if we do anything that will lose his good opinion it will not be soon made up. I said all I could to him, but his desire was that I should lose not an instant in letting you know these circumstances. The chance is that matters are arranged before this reaches you; but if otherwise, pray try and protract if it is at all practicable. . . . I could fill this sheet, but am afraid of alarm from a long letter.—I am always, my dear Sir, yours most truly, R. CADELL."

the present moment Mr. Scott is not desirous of parting with the shares he holds in his own works, and I think he is right in holding them. He will publish a new poem, at least it is his present intention to do so, about the end of next year, or early in 1815; and it gives me much pleasure to say that his wish is that the whole management of the same should be in our hands and yours. On this subject, as well as Mr. Scott's future literary plans, I have just had the most satisfactory and agreeable communication possible.

"I need not tell you that we have all a deep interest in Mr. Scott's success, and it occurred to me that an account with a London banker would be a most respectable and quiet way for him to conduct some of his present and necessary cash transactions. I wrote accordingly to Messrs. Brooks and Co., who readily agreed to open it. I believe I explained to you the nature of our account with that house, but as Mr. Scott was not possessed of a sufficient amount of accepted bills (which is our deposit), he proposed his friend the Duke of Buccleuch as a guarantee, his Grace having agreed to be so for the sum required; but Messrs. Brooks and Co. rather wished, in addition to this guarantee, to have a deposit of accepted London bills, though at long dates. The object now is to get the necessary acceptances, which, through your aid and friendship, I have no doubt will be accomplished. The extent of the assistance Mr. Scott now wants is about £3500, and it has occurred that if you will grant bills for that sum, to be deposited in the hands of Brooks and Co., we would give you a letter of guarantee for a proportion

of this sum, say one-half of it, in order to secure both you and us. Mr. Scott agrees to convey over his half share of the copyright of The Lady of the Lake, Rokeby, and the whole of that of a new poem, the price of which to be afterwards fixed. Your bills would be used in no other way than as a deposit in the bankers' hands; *our* bills would not answer in the hands of our own bankers in an accommodation-account opened at our request. The bills will be required at nine, twelve, eighteen, and twenty-four months, and as Mr. Scott's wants are only temporary, they will be taken up at maturity without any advance either on your part or ours, and if you have no objection, one-half of the amount should be drawn by the firm of Ballantyne and Co. I have no doubt we might find it our interest hereafter to be possessed of all Mr. Scott's copyrights, and I have as little doubt, from the footing on which matters now stand, that this, as well as the price of the new poem, will be arranged in terms mutually agreeable. You will be pleased to know that everything stands between Mr. Scott and Messrs. Ballantyne on the footing of the greatest cordiality. I left Abbotsford yesterday. Mr. Scott was to write to you himself by this day's post on the subject of the present letter.—I am, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

MESSRS. LONGMAN to MR. CONSTABLE.

"LONDON, *Sept. 9th*, 1813.

"DEAR SIR,—We have received your letter of the 4th inst., and as Mr. Rees will soon reach Edinburgh, we will in the meantime consider the matter, and put him in pos-

session of our views of the subject, as we cannot previously come to any decision.

"We are favoured with a letter from Mr. Scott this morning, and we propose writing him to the same effect, and believe us, dear Sir, yours very truly,

"LONGMAN AND CO."

MR. SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, 14*th Sept.* [1813].

"DEAR CONSTABLE,—I have your letter, and one to the same effect from Messrs. Longman. All I can say of the matter is, that if they do not come handsomely forward, we must look elsewhere for London publishers, and such may, I should think, be found. But as they can hardly be said to run any great risk, I think it likely that Longman and Co. may come in. I shall be greatly obliged to you to let me know when Rees comes to town. I will probably have a visit from him.—Yours truly,

"W. SCOTT."

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. SCOTT.

"EDINB., 25 *Sepr.* 1813.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Mr. Rees arrived here on Thursday evening. I had some conversation with him yesterday on the subject of the London account, and again this morning. He is to write to his partners about it by this post, and will have their final answer in course. From what dropped from Mr. R., I can see that they are very anxious not to increase their engagements at present, from their very heavy stock; and *in case of a refusal*, my part-

ner and I, since yesterday, have been in cogitation how money can be had independently of the London account altogether, and we have, I am happy to say, so far succeeded, if the plan shall meet your ideas. We find that £3000, or even £5000, can be had immediately on what is called a redeemable annuity, on a bond by yourself and the Duke of Buccleuch; that is, a bond for the regular payment of the annuity, which, for £5000, would be from five to six hundred a year; the bond redeemable on paying six months' annuity in advance at any time. This would, I think, be a most snug way of getting hold of the cash; and I have no doubt but the sale of part of the stock, and aid of a new Poem, would enable you most comfortably to get quit of it without paying many years' premium. The common interest of such a loan would, you know, be £250. I write in great haste for the post, and perhaps not very intelligibly, but I can explain it farther if necessary. I thought you would be anxious, and did not wish a post to leave Edinburgh without telling you the result of my conversation with Mr. Rees, who will write himself. He knows nothing of course of this new plan.—Yours, A. C."

The following letter carries us back to a mode of losing money now forbidden by an enactment of the law; but practised in those days by peer and peasant, and by the soberest citizens, both lay and clerical:[1]—

[1] The allusion is here to a lottery ticket. On Nov. 13 Mr. Scott wrote as follows from Abbotsford to Mr. John Ballantyne:—"I think I will make one cast for fortune and buy a lottery ticket. Will you send for one to Sievewright's office, and as you are not very lucky, I

MR. SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, 6 *November* 1813.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I embrace your proposal to stand to half the chance of the ticket, and two halves, and we will see how luck will favour us. I shall be in town upon the 12th, and settle the bill for Dame Fortune's favours. For my own part I can't much complain of the good lady, having had my own share of luck in this world, though we cannot expect it should be always smooth water.

"I see your Catalogue flaming in front of the papers, which I daresay will be a great treat to amateurs, and come well in to *hansel* John's opening campaign. We had the finest season here that was ever known.—Believe me very truly yours, W. SCOTT."

Such letters as those just given show that the relations between Scott and my father had resumed a friendly aspect; and as evidence that those with the Messrs. Ballantyne were not less amicable, I shall quote here a letter from each of the brothers, which could not have been written to a man whose goodwill they had any reason to doubt. John Ballantyne, by my father's advice, had

would rather Mrs. Ballantyne or your mother took the trouble of buying it than you, as the doctrine of chances will be more in their favour. Or perhaps if Mr. Constable is walking that way, he will make the purchase. I should have some confidence in *his* good stars. The lottery begins drawing as to-morrow. Nothing else occurs except that you should beat your brains about getting in debts and selling some stock if possible. Surely matters must now be looking rather better."

started as an auctioneer, an occupation for which his quick intelligence and lively wit eminently qualified him, besides his knowledge of books, and taste in the fine arts, to which departments of the calling, I believe, he chiefly if not altogether limited his views. On the 24th April 1814 he writes to my father:—

"TRINITY, *24th April* 1814.

"DEAR SIR,—I hope you are enjoying yourself now where you are, in the centre of all the sources of enjoyment, mental and corporeal, with a king for your compeer, a purse as large as your liberality, and filled to your wish.[1] I only desire to be one of your party.

"Very little has occurred since you left us. Dr. Ross's books, from the competition of the libraries, an additional and considerable purchaser in Mr. Ferguson of Raith, and some other causes, have, in general, sold greatly beyond expectations, and since I have been at them, I have received for sale no fewer than *three* other libraries,—one, that of Mr. Ninian Hill; the second, great part of Bryce's stock; and the last, an extremely good collection at Hope Park, belonging to a Mr. Naesmyth, an advocate, and a Dr. Naesmyth, both dead. I am greatly puzzled therefore what to do. It is surely a bad time to sell at present, and 'a certain person'[2] has taken it into his old white hat and green jacket that my going to London just now would work out our redemption. Great efforts are making to

[1] My father was at this time in London, in company with the Rev. John Fleming of Craigs, parish minister of Colinton, known among his friends as "King Fleming."

[2] Mr. Scott.

introduce the knowledge of the Edinburgh Annual Register into France, where, it seems, the appetite for political information is quite ravenous, and the study of English universal. It is conceived that, once introduced, I might get rid of great part of this heavy stock by exchange in Paris, and that the French books I should thus acquire would find an immediate sale in this country, if brought over *soon*, and before the country was inundated with them, which it is almost certain to be. What do you think of this?

"I spent part of yesterday afternoon with Mr. Cadell, at his brother's, where there was a gentleman just from France, who thought (with Mr. Cadell also) the project a good one; and he, in particular, assured me the demand for good English books in Paris was most extraordinary. What think you of my selling for Naps and Louises two or three hundred sets Edinburgh Review and Encyclopædia, Swift, etc.? There is sap[1] in it.

"If I must put off these sales (which I think I could bring about) my business would be to set out as soon as possible, and meet you in town, where, if nothing else were done, I could make a few exchanges, and satisfy the person who is so instant I shall go. I can manage the cobs with very little aid. I beg you to write in course of post.

"Downs is going on as usual, taking a canister of blackguard every day. He generally calls at the sale-room daily to play off a volley, but I have not seen much of him otherwise, as I take no invitations out during my

[1] *Quære*: Is this an abbreviation of *sapientia*?

sale, if I can help it. Your most reputable coadjutor Cadell looks well, is keen and lively, and always at his post. He has insisted for a debit on my private fortune to-morrow, and he must have it. The fellow knows as well by the cut of my jib when I have cash in my casket, as a physician knows by the pulse when a man has a plethora.

"I omitted to mention that the gentleman I met yesterday from France offered me most useful introductions, one to Perigot's house, where he is known. But I could obtain others from a quarter you wot of that would do my business in that respect effectually.—I am ever, dear Sir, your obliged and faithful servant,

"JOHN BALLANTYNE."

To this my father replied as follows :—

"LONDON, *28th April* 1814.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with your letter of Sunday, and it gives me great pleasure to hear that Dr. Ross's library has sold so well. As you have asked my opinion, I shall frankly tell you that I consider the season past for selling any other collection in Edinburgh to advantage at the present time; and I would take the liberty of recommending you to delay bringing forward any of the libraries you mention till the commencement of your winter's campaign, when I hope you might publish a Catalogue equal at least in extent to that which began your career.

"I have no doubt that a number of the Edinburgh

Annual Register might be sold on the Continent, but I am not quite certain whether you ought to start for Paris at the present time. The whole world appears crowding to that quarter, and I have been told, on pretty good authority, that there is no getting beyond Calais for want of conveyances. The expense of living in Paris is also dreadfully high. I heard it hinted the other day that some of our friends here have a person already in Paris, but for this I have no good authority. Had it been at all convenient for me to have remained absent from Edinburgh an additional six weeks, I should probably have attempted the journey myself—not, however, from the hope of doing a great deal of business at the present moment (when things must be in such a state of bustle), but for the purpose of ascertaining on the spot what traffic is likely to be hereafter carried on to advantage in our commodity. I should certainly have been very cautious in my dealings, and I am quite of your opinion that, ere long, we shall have a perfect inundation of French literature, in which, at least for the present, I feel no ambition to speculate.

"The trade here is certainly better than last year, but the American market being still shut out operates very seriously. If you have closed your auction for the season, I should think you might do something here by way of exchange, and, as you are a light and rapid traveller, you might be tempted to cross the Channel, and take a peep at Monsieur. In this case I would recommend you to transmit *Jock* to meet you at Calais with the grey pony; but you have now no chance of seeing your friend the

Wee Man, as I cannot consent to your following his fortunes. Provided you leave Mr. Cadell in good humour, I have only to add that you may command my services. —Best compliments to Mrs. Ballantyne, and believe me, my dear Sir, very faithfully yours,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

Three months later Mr. James Ballantyne writes as follows, and though I have no evidence that his request was complied with, I have little doubt that it was so :—

MR. JAMES BALLANTYNE to MR. CONSTABLE.

"KELSO, 17*th July* 1814.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am going to ask a considerable favour from you, but I shall not tax your patience by any apology; indeed, what apology but the old one have I—necessity?

"About two years since, when I little foresaw the train of painful circumstances which have since happened, I contracted a debt for wine with Robertson the ironmonger, to the amount of £75 odds; and about six months ago I gave him my bill, at three months, for the amount. When it fell due, I wished him to renew the bill, which, in an evil hour for me, he did—taking my acceptance in exchange. He, as you know, has failed in the interval, so that both sums, amounting to £150, are now due.

"At the time when this unlucky debt was contracted I conceived myself well entitled to purchase the wine; for

I had a good printing business, and, to my ignorant eye, everything seemed prosperous in the bookselling. Neither John *nor others* complained, and I limited my attention to my own immediate department. Now, however, that things have turned out so contrary to expectations, when every draft is like so much blood from the veins, I acknowledge that I feel insuperable aversion to make this misfortune known to *the partners*. It would engender gloom and dissatisfaction, and perhaps even remonstrance and censure, which, conscious I do not deserve them, I should find it very difficult to bear with patience. My great and anxious object, therefore, is to pay these two bills without touching the business funds, and to enable myself to do so by severe and steady economy for the next two years. But still it is necessary for me to borrow the cash in the meantime ;—and now comes my unceremonious application to you. Will you, my dear Sir, accommodate me with the sum in question for twelve months? I ask it, not as a man of business from another man of business, but (if after all that is come and gone you will permit me so honourable a distinction) as friend from friend. A bill at six months, renewable for six months more, would answer the purpose; and it would be a favour which, in the particularly irksome circumstances of the case, would impress me with the liveliest gratitude. The repayment of the money would be a poor repayment of the kindness.

"However you may answer this, I should esteem myself much obliged by your keeping the application to yourself and Mr. Cadell. I have not mentioned, and shall not

mention, it to John. I may add, as an additional embarrassment, that I advanced Joubert, the little pleasant Frenchman, £30, which, alas! is gone to France—or the devil, for all I know. I have not seen or heard anything about it.

"Perhaps, my dear Sir, you think me not unceremonious only, but something worse, in making this application. And indeed there are not many men to whom, in the circumstances, I would have ventured it. But I know you to be generous, and above harbouring the least trace of angry feelings which you have once discarded. I shall not, however, be surprised if you should decline obliging me; and in that case I can only request you to forgive this liberty—a very painful one to me.

"If you answer me *by return*, I could make convenient arrangements here respecting the cash.

"Again forgive me, and believe me, my dear Sir, your ever faithful and obliged friend and servant,

"JAMES BALLANTYNE."

CHAPTER II.

Waverley—Supplement to Encyclopædia, Articles on Chivalry and the Drama —Memorie of the Somervilles, etc.—Tour in Lighthouse Yacht—The Lord of the Isles—Death of the Duke of Buccleuch—"Accommodation."

SIR WALTER SCOTT tells us in the General Preface to his Novels that the opening chapters of Waverley were written at Ashestiel in 1805. For five years these seem to have lain neglected, perhaps forgotten; but in September 1810 we find them in the hands of James Ballantyne for critical opinion, and we may presume that his judgment was not sufficiently satisfactory, as the work was again laid aside until 1813. "Looking," Mr. Lockhart tells us, "into an old cabinet in search of some fishing-tackle, Scott's eye chanced to light once more on the Ashestiel fragment. He read over those introductory chapters,—thought they had been undervalued, and determined to finish the story."[1] Before the 12th of January 1814 Mr. Erskine had read the greater part of the first volume, "and expressed his decided opinion that Waverley would prove the most popular of all his friend's writings."[2]

On this early portion of the work being shown to my father, he at once detected the author, and, after a few days' consideration, offered £700 for the copyright. Mr.

[1] See Life, vol. iii. p. 32.

[2] See Life, vol. iii. p. 124.

Lockhart expresses his opinion that, inadequate as this sum may now appear, in the existing state of novel-literature, the offer was a liberal one. Mr. Scott, however, declared that if the novel should prove unsuccessful the sum was too great, and too small in case it should succeed. It was ultimately decided that author and publisher should equally divide the profits, and the first edition of Waverley appeared anonymously on the 7th of July 1814. The impression consisted of 1000 copies, which disappeared within five weeks after publication. A second followed immediately, of 2000 copies,—a third and a fourth, each of 1000 copies, appeared in October and November of the same year.[1]

To show how resolute from the first Scott was in insisting on the preservation of his incognito, I quote the following passage in a letter from Mr. Cadell, in which he writes, on being asked by James Ballantyne his opinion of "a certain novel:"—"I gave it, and *it* gave great satisfaction. I stated also, as confirming *our* good opinion, that we would give a handsome sum for it. He said: 'That you can't do, for you say it will be found out,' to which I answered by stating my opinion that it would itself tell tales. He replied nearly as follows:—'The author, some weeks ago, in speaking on this point, most

[1] "To avoid recurring to these details, I may as well state at once, that a fifth edition of 1000 copies appeared in January 1815; a sixth, of 1500, in June 1816; a seventh, of 2000, in October 1817; an eighth, of 2000, in April 1821; that in the collective editions, prior to 1829, 11,000 were disposed of; and that the sale of the current edition, with notes, begun in 1829, has already reached 40,000 copies. Well might Constable regret that he had not ventured to offer £1000 for the whole copyright of Waverley!"—Life, vol. iii. p. 296.

sternly said that he would *deny it to the last;* but if it was decidedly and fairly brought home to him, *not another sheet should be printed of it during his life.*' Ballantyne added his sincere regret at not having made you acquainted with this circumstance, and requested me to do so."

Mr. Lockhart tells us that there was a considerable pause between the finishing of the first volume of Waverley and the beginning of the second, in consequence of my father having "earnestly requested" Scott to undertake, for the Supplement to the Encyclopædia, the articles on Chivalry and the Drama, and that, "anxious to gratify the generous bookseller, he at once laid aside his tale until he had finished the two essays."[1]

In this year also (1813) my father published Mr. Scott's edition of the Memorie of the Somervilles, in two octavo volumes, and 'Rowland's Letting off the Humours of the Blood in the Head Veins,' reprinted in small quarto, from the edition of 1611, annotated by the same editor.

[1] See Life, vol. iii. p. 125.—The article on the Drama was not furnished to the Editor of the Encyclopædia until the close of 1818. On the 19th November in that year, Mr. Cadell wrote as follows to my father:—"Mr. Scott when here yesterday was regretting the pose Drama had put this part of the Supplement to, and said he could have done it in a fortnight. When I mentioned this to Napier (who just called with the announcement for 21st Dec. as Mr. S. went out), he was most anxious to try and get a short article from him on the subject. I went to him about it, and on my stating the urgency of the case he most cheerfully agreed to do a short article in time for it. All he said was, It will stop something else a little; but if you must have it, you must have it. He was, he said, very busy when I called, and I strongly suspected for B. M."

It was in the autumn of 1813, while still anxious on account of his publishing firm, and busy with the closing volumes of Swift, that Mr. Scott renewed negotiations with my father for the sale of the copyright of a new poem, The Lord of the Isles, which title had been adopted instead of The Nameless Glen, as originally proposed; and on the 10th July 1814 he writes from Abbotsford :— "I have almost settled to take the tour of Scotland and the Isles in the sloop belonging to the Northern Light Commissioners. You shall hear of the result," and on the 22d July, as follows :—

"DEAR SIR,—I told you, when you made a very fair offer for The Lord of the Isles, that I would think of it and reply when my materials, etc., were somewhat arranged. I have been busy with this matter since I was here, and I really think that, with the advantage of my proposed tour—when we are to visit everything curious from Fife-Ness to Greenock, whether on continent or island, I may boldly set considerable value on the fruit of my labours. I mention this because, I assure you frankly, I would not be more grieved at disappointment on my own account than on yours. I therefore propose to close with your terms for half the work, you giving Longman the offer of an equal share with you, for I owe this house too much kindness to leave them out. The price to be 1500 guineas, settled by such acceptances as will suit our mutual convenience, which can be arranged on my coming to town. I wish to leave things straight behind me, and sail upon the 27th, unless delayed by the wind. I should therefore wish to see you on Tuesday morning

about eleven o'clock, and for that purpose shall call at the shop. The poem will go to press almost immediately on my return, and be out, as I conceive, in January at latest.

"I mentioned to you the weighty reasons I have for retaining a moiety of this copyright, and I assure you all good jockeys choose that their rider should have bets depending upon the issue of the race. Upon this moiety I only wish to have half profits accepted for on publication at such a date as will meet your own returns from the booksellers,—you and Longman managing the whole your own way.

"In other circumstances I should certainly have stipulated a contingent advantage in case of such success as The Lady of the Lake; but you have been kind and friendly, and kindness and friendship will, I hope, never be thrown away upon me. I assure you I shall be delighted that you make a right good thing of it. Be pleased to send me a line to Castle Street on Monday, stating whether this sketch of an agreement meets your views. I think it is so like your own that it leaves little to be settled between us. I shall be there by three o'clock, and you can say if it is convenient for you to meet me on Tuesday.

"Abbotsford is looking beautiful, but I am still annoyed with workpeople. I trust it will be swept and garnished against my return.—Believe me very truly yours,

"WALTER SCOTT."

Two of the conditions suggested by my father were

objected to by Mr. Scott in the following letters, and subsequently set aside :—

"*July* 27, 1814.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I re-enclose the missives, which do not, in two particulars, quite meet my meaning. In the first place, although I do not foresee the least chance of any change in my continuing to employ your house as agents for my moiety, yet I cannot with any prudence bind myself specially to do so in all time coming, or under all circumstances which may occur in the manifold changes of life. At the same time, I would not wish to derange your calculations; and therefore I think you will be safe by a positive bargain as to all the editions which may be published during the years 1815 and 1816 —which will probably be a good many; nor have I the least idea of anything occurring to induce me to change this arrangement afterwards; only it would render my property much less valuable should it at any time be sold, either in my life or after my death, if it was clogg'd with a positive obligation to use any house as agent exclusively. The other circumstance I have to notice is, that Longman's house will probably think they ought to have half of the whole bargain, that is half of the agency, as well as the property. Should you wish any time to consider this matter, the bargain may be limited to one-half of the poem, and the rest left to stand till my return. There is a good deal in the reasons you urge, and if Longman's people were to be satisfied, I am sure I would be content. But I doubt they will not consider themselves as well used; and you know I have powerful reasons (besides

their uniform handsome conduct) for not disobliging them.[1] By limiting the agency to every edition of the poem which may be published in 1815 and 1816, which you can do by an interlineation, No. I. will quite suit my idea of the transaction. If you can, by any bargain with L. and Co., get off the 10 per cent. in this case, which I would think very fair, I should be very well pleased.

"I keep the bills, as there is no danger of our differing; and when you return me No. I., with limitations, I will send you the acceptance.—Yours truly,

"W. SCOTT."

"THURSDAY, 28*th July* 1814.

"DEAR SIR,—After taking a night to think of it, I think we must necessarily abide by No. I. I would willingly oblige you, but the risk of disobliging our friends in the Row, which they would probably only express negatively, yet feel very sensibly, is not to be encountered. Even your friendship, trammelled as you are by other engagements in the printing way, could not remedy the inconvenience that might arise from our friends admitting any of those feelings of jealousy at a preference, to which the trade are so particularly open. They possess the power, and have uniformly shown the inclination, to be steady friends, and I would wish them to see that I consider them as such. I will never want opportunities enough (of which one has lately occurred) to be of some use to Edinburgh, but in London it is only on an occasion of this kind that my friends will look for some mark of my remembrance.

[1] The employment by Messrs. Longman of James Ballantyne and Co.

"I need not say how much I shall be satisfied to transfer the bond from 12 to 8 per cent. Indeed, I trust to be able to clear off a large part of it next Whitsunday.[1]

'The boat rocks at the pier of Leith,
The wind blows blithely down the ferry;
The ship rides at the Inch of Keith,
And I maun neither stop nor tarry.'[2]

"W. S."

The following letters, written during his voyage by Mr. Scott to Mr. James Ballantyne and my father, will be read with interest:—

To Mr. James Ballantyne.

"Kirkwall, Orkney, 13*th August* 1814.

"Dear James,—I have hitherto accomplished my voyage very well among these rough seas, and with no very favourable weather. We have seen all that is remarkable in Shetland, and arrived here yesterday. I was rather surprised not to find a letter from you, but presume it

[1] "As Scott passed through Edinburgh on his return from his voyage, the negotiation as to The Lord of the Isles, which had been protracted through several months, was completed—Constable agreeing to give fifteen hundred guineas for one-half of the copyright, while the other moiety was retained by the author. The sum mentioned had been offered by Constable at an early stage of the affair, but it was not until now accepted, in consequence of the earnest wish of Scott and Ballantyne to saddle the publisher of the new poem with part of their old 'quire stock,'—which Constable, however, ultimately persisted in refusing." See Life, vol. iii. p. 295.

[2] This stanza will be recognised as a ready adaptation of a verse in Burns's fine lyric, "Go fetch to me a pint o' wine:"—

"The boat rocks at the pier o' Leith,
Fu' loud the wind blaws frae the ferry,
The ship rides by the Berwick-Law,
And I maun leave my bonnie Mary."

may be in next post, in which case I may yet receive it. I have seen some of the grandest and most tremendous sea-scenery in the world, without more inconvenience than *roughing it* a little in the rain and spray, and occasional sickness, but only when the weather has been severe and the ship rolling very much. I have not found it necessary to have recourse to your remedy. We leave this place to-night, but shall have such letters as may arrive on Monday forwarded after us to another part of the island of Pomona by express. After this I shall be out of cry until I reach Torloisk. I suppose you have already written to me to Mrs. Maclean Clephane's care; if not, that direction will be too late after this reaches you, and you will be pleased to write without a day's delay to me to the care of Colonel MacNeil, Carskey, Campbelltown. Always remember, your letters may likely miscarry, and express yourself accordingly; and in answering this letter, suppose it likely that I may not have received your former letters.—I remain yours very truly, WALTER SCOTT."

TO THE SAME.

"LIGHTHOUSE YACHT, OFF DUNSTAFFNAGE, NEAR OBAN, 1*st Sept.* 1814.

"DEAR JAMES,—I am here after a very pleasant, though occasionally a stormy, voyage; but we have seen everything that is curious, and much that is seldom seen or heard of. We have now circumnavigated the greater part of Scotland; to-day we stand across the narrow channel for Ireland, to visit the Giant's Causeway, which is the ultimate object of our voyage. After this we return to

Greenock, to which place be so kind as to address me, *Post-office, to remain till called for.* In no respect fail to do this by return of post. I conclude I shall be at Greenock in eight days, but say by the 10th or 12th at furthest, and shall then come to Edinburgh. I conclude you have written, by my former direction, to the care of a gentleman near Campbelltown, which letter I shall not, however, receive for two or three days. I found no letter for me at Torloisk. Make my service to Mr. Constable, and tell him I am not

'Killed by Hieland bodies,
Nor eaten like a wether-haggis.'[1]

"I suppose John is by this time off and nearly returned, and trust you have been managing with address in his absence.—Yours in haste, WALTER SCOTT.

"I shall be ready to start *strong in scenery*, if that will do good."

TO MR. JAMES BALLANTYNE.

"*6th September* [1814].

"DEAR JAMES,—I got your *two* letters this morning, and a very friendly one from our friend Constable to the same purpose. I am very sorry for these perplexities, but am always less vexed with those for which a good reason can be assigned than when things run on a heap without reasonable cause or due information. We are now off Campbelltown, but in a squally day, with the wind right against us.

[1] See Robert Burns's Epistle to Cardonell, inquiring after Captain Grose—

"Is he slain by Highland bodies,
And eaten like a wether-haggis?"

"8*th* [1814].

"I could not get this ashore at Campbelltown, the weather being very rough. We have since been in a calm, and made no way almost at all. At length, however, we are within two miles of Greenock, and I judge it best to send this off immediately, to say I shall be at Edinburgh to-morrow, by dinner-time, and will take my beefsteak in St. John Street, if not inconvenient for you, of which you will apprise me by a line. I shall find probably a letter for me at Greenock, which I shall not, however, answer, unless it contains something requiring instant despatch.

"The blow I received some days since from the unexpected tidings of the death of the Duke of Buccleuch has given me such a shock as made me very insensible to other bad intelligence. I have little doubt of getting things arranged, though of course D. and S.'s failure will occasion great loss and additional inconvenience. You had better ask Constable to dine with us."

To Mr. Constable.

"Lighthouse Yacht, off Campbelltown,
6*th Sept.* 1814.

"My dear Sir,—I had your favour this morning, and am particularly obliged to you for your kindness in writing. I trust there will be no great difficulty in arranging the matters you mention, as they are now so much narrowed in compass as to be manageable, and the ultimate security of every kind is now superabundant. But, of course, at such a pinch as this, there may be some

plague and trouble; but for all our sakes, our lively little friend *must be carried through.* I am writing within sight of Campbelltown, but in a heavy squall, so that I have to secure my paper with one hand, and write as I best can with the other, and I trust to get my letter ashore to the post-office with one to J. B., from whom I heard to the same purpose as from you. I shall send him some means of answering any present pressure, in case I should find it impossible to get to Edinburgh by the 10th, which however is, I trust, very unlikely, as I hope to be at Greenock or Ayr, as the wind will best serve me, to-morrow. We have had a most delightful and instructive voyage, and have visited everything that is curious in the Scottish Isles from Shetland to Islay, not to mention the Giant's Causeway on the Irish coast, which we saw yesterday. So I trust we shall be very soon ready to go to press with The Lord of the Isles. I am glad our little love-begotten babe[1] walks briskly, though without the advantage of a father's name. I trust we may give him a brother or sister in summer.

"I confide in your assistance in helping to keep things straight till I can get to the helm upon the 11th or 12th. I have no encumbrances which can prevent my getting things squared with a little assistance, and this you may rely upon implicitly. I cannot write more than the needful at present, being much distressed with the unexpected and most melancholy incident at Dalkeith, which I only heard two days since at Dr. Richardson's, at Portrush in Ireland. You may guess what a dreadful shock

[1] Waverley.

it was. Everything is flying about the vessel in such a style that I must close abruptly.—Yours very truly,

"WALTER SCOTT.

"There are no horses to be had at Campbelltown, otherwise I would take that mode of travelling; but I think we cannot miss getting either to Greenock or Ayr very soon.

"*Postscript, 8th September.*—We could not send this letter ashore for the stormy weather, and have since been pestered with calms, but we are now about to land at Greenock, so that I shall be in Edinburgh to-morrow by dinner-time. We find we have been once or twice very near an American cruiser—a capture would have been a pretty job! I did not send any enclosure to J. B., as I shall be so soon at home—within a few hours after you have this."

TO MR. JAMES BALLANTYNE.

"ON BOARD THE STEAMBOAT BETWEEN
GLASGOW AND GREENOCK, *Thursday, 5 o'clock.*

"MY DEAR JAMES,—I received all your letters at Greenock, and in consequence of the last resume my intention of spending one day at Killermont and returning with our friend W. Erskine. I cannot at present write explicitly on business, but highly approve of what you have done, and have no fear whatever of the results. 'Time and I,' says the Spanish proverb, 'against any two.' I will not therefore dine with you to-morrow, but rather wish you to breakfast with me on Sunday, or to call on

Saturday night about seven or eight o'clock. I wish I could as easily wash my deep sorrow out of my mind as I can dismiss the apprehensions of the loss of world's gear; but I am most deeply distressed indeed on account of the generous and noble survivor, and the more than kind friend whom I have lost.—Yours ever,

"W. SCOTT."[1]

It is matter of continual regret to me, and of inconvenience in the performance of my present duty, that I have not had access to the letters and other business-books of Archibald Constable and Company after the year 1811, as I am thereby precluded from giving a complete view of many interesting transactions; but I do the best I can with the materials at my disposal, and trust to indulgence from my readers for the imperfect performance. So early as 1806, one year after Mr. Scott had become the partner of Mr. James Ballantyne, I find three acknowledgments,

[1] In a letter to Mr. Morritt, dated 14th September 1814, Scott thus alludes to this interesting voyage, and to the poem whose localities he then visited:—

"I will shortly mention the train of our voyage, reserving particulars till another day. We sailed from Leith and skirted the Scottish coast, visiting the Bullers of Buchan and other remarkable objects—went to Shetland—thence to Orkney—from thence round Cape Wrath to the Hebrides, making descents everywhere, where there was anything to be seen—thence to Lewis and the Long Island—to Skye—to Iona—and so forth, lingering among the Hebrides as long as we could. . . . My principal employment for the autumn will be reducing the knowledge I have acquired of the localities of the islands into scenery and stage-room for The Lord of the Isles, of which renowned romance I think I have repeated some portions to you. It was elder born than Rokeby, though it gave place to it in publishing." See Life, vol. iii. p. 292.

such as the following, of *accommodation* granted by my father to their firm :—"We have received this day your acceptance for £184, which with much gratitude we acknowledge to be given for our accommodation, and that no value had been furnished by us for its amount." How far this system was extended I have not the means of knowing, but there is no reason to doubt that it was continued until the memorable breach in 1808, and it was certainly resumed in 1813, so soon as that breach had been healed. The following letters of Mr. Scott, with one from John Ballantyne, to my father, all written within a few weeks after the return from the Hebrides, bear witness to the close attention Mr. Scott gave to the conduct of affairs, and for that reason they are quoted, though in the absence of the correspondence that led to them, and which they elicited, only an imperfect view is afforded of the transactions to which they relate.

"ABBOTSFORD, 17*th Sept.* [1814].

"DEAR SIR,—I received your letter, and whatever might be the disappointment, I never could seriously think of resenting what you do from a necessary attention to your own interest. Indeed, whatever is to hurt or run great risk of hurting *you*, cannot serve *me* as matters stand. As all these acceptances, however, without any important exception, are for value of one kind or other, I hope they will be gradually withdrawn from the circle, since otherwise, in future transactions between us, which are likely to be large, this mass of paper will inconvenience us all. I wish, if it were not too much trouble, Mr.

Cadell and John Ballantyne would make a note of the dates at which these bills fall in, and where they are lying, marking the Swift bills so far as not already renewed to the full date. Of course all sorts of mutual accommodations will be afforded, but it would be satisfactory to see the currency of these engagements. This is the more necessary, because, although I cannot urge you to do what is out of course for my accommodation, and although I am equally anxious to give every accommodation even where I need acceptances in regular course of business, yet you must be aware that in my circumstances at present I will need to draw upon you (or rather J. B. will do so) for the Somerville Memoirs, or a moiety, which would do better, as Rees and you can settle it; also for balance of author's profits on W., of which you were so good as to promise me a statement, which I presume will run from £250 to £300, or thereabout; and lastly, for the profits of a moiety of Lord of the Isles when published. I do not mean to press for acceptances on the account of the two first articles earlier than the beginning and middle of October, and I believe I can manage to have them cashed, if at short date, without going to the Edinburgh market. In the meantime I have applied for some cash to the Bank of Scotland, which I believe I shall get, to put by present demands.

"I hope James Ballantyne is ready for the Poem, as I shall wish it to go to press instantly. I find I can get it out by Xmas, which will be a great advantage to all concerned. I think it should be advertised without an hour's delay—'The Lord of the Isles: a Poem by Walter

Scott, Esq.' This might be made as public as you please, and as soon, as it will put a different face upon our transactions. I have made up my mind to do my best upon it, and I thank God that did I need (as who does not?) a lesson of patience under the disappointments and struggles of life, I should find it in a friend at no great distance, who is bearing distress of a much deeper nature with the most manly fortitude. I shall beg to hear from you when you have a little time, and request you to let me know whether commercial matters are looking better, whether Waverley sells, and so forth.—Believe me, dear Sir, yours very faithfully, WALTER SCOTT."

"ABBOTSFORD, 26*th Sept.* [1814].

"DEAR SIR,—I wrote you some time ago, mentioning that I would have occasion to draw upon you for balance due on Waverley, and now do so at six months for £300, holding myself and the next edition accountable for any over-draught. As I trust I shall be able to keep all my demands on your house, during these times of perplexity, within the rules of business, I hope I am not now exceeding them. Times of mutual accommodation will, I doubt not, return; at present I shall confine myself to the square, and have no doubt of your punctuality. At the same time I assure you, and have in some respect endeavoured to show it, that I retain full sense of the trouble you have had in our affairs. I would write a longer letter, but I fear I encroach upon your time, as I have not had the pleasure to hear from you, which I impute to the business of this anxious period. It will, I know, give you pleasure

to learn I have got the accommodation I wished.—I remain, dear Sir, your obedient servant,

"WALTER SCOTT.

"ABBOTSFORD, *9th Oct.* 1814.

"DEAR SIR,—I was duly favoured with your obliging letter, with state of Waverley, which is quite satisfactory. I observe I have overdrawn about £36. Presuming the expense of advertising will be somewhat less on the third edition, the profits divisible will be above £440 to each party; now, my pressing occasions will oblige me to anticipate £400 of this by a draft on you at six months, which as the book will be out in a fortnight, and is a ready-money article, would not, I know, in the general case, be at all inconvenient to you. In these hard times, however, it may be that this may not quite suit you, in which case I can suit my convenience by disposing of copies at sale price to the extent of £440, being the author's interest in this new edition; but then the purchaser would, I suspect, desire a more effectual share in future editions, and might besides materially interfere with your sale. This you will consider, believing at the same time that it is only the peculiar circumstances of my situation, making it absolutely necessary to me to realize my funds one way or other, which occasions my offering an alternative of this nature, and that I will have the greatest regret in at all interfering with your interest in this work, either now or hereafter. I have desired John Ballantyne to talk to you about this matter, in case anything can be hit upon which may suit us both.

"Somerville is finished, and I presume delivered. I

have a claim upon you for one-half print and paper, and Longman for the other, which can be adjusted later in the month, if this present business is closed.—Believe me, dear Sir, yours very truly, WALTER SCOTT."

MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE to MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND CO.

"PRINCES STREET, *Saturday, 15th Oct.* 1814.

"DEAR SIRS,—I am unwilling to intrude on your time, or to harass you with the old tale of our frequently recurring difficulties, although now so near the shore; but I am just returned from the *south*, where, after everything having been done that could be done, I am still £310 short of paying sums due on Tuesday and the 19th.

"In the long and disagreeable conversations which occurred on the apparent impossibility of procuring this sum, in mentioning my friend Ainslie's absence, on whom therefore we could not depend for any part, it fell from me what I had done for you the 24th last month, viz., found you at an hour's warning about £400, being £100 in cash for a week, and the balance by bill at three months for that term—on which our friend contends that we (his security being included in our engagements) are fairly warranted to request a similar obligation. These are terms, however, on which *I* do not consider *myself* entitled to ask a favour of the kind, on account of the personal obligations I owe to your house; and should the circumstance be utterly inadmissible by you, I beg that you will write me such a letter as I may send to my principal, to exonerate me for his bills coming back, as I am really wearied in mind with being so

bandied about, and so dead tired with my journeys, on a little exhausted horse, that I can do no more.

"It appears to me, if I am correct—and I would wish to be so, as the statement must go with your letter—that our name (of course his) is pledged as acceptors to—.

8th March, 9 mos.	£341	2	0
„ 12 mos.	341	0	0
„ 15 mos.	341	0	0
And two bills of which you got back the memdm. from me, and did not return, about . . .	600	0	0
	£1620	0	0

besides the 24th September one.

You are pledged for us . .	£200	0	0		
„ „ . .	189	16	0		
„ „ . .	253	19	0		
				640	0 0

"Mr. S.'s own bills, and the transference of two to our and Jas. and Co.'s names, on renewal, I do not take into the list of engagements, of course, which I have to repay, as he might as well have paid them, or negotiated them, with another house as with ours; and we have been merely used as the medium for procrastinating the date of their ultimate payment.

"Can you stead us, therefore, in this £310, by a part loan in cash till the end of the month, and acceptance (for us to retire when due) for the balance, or otherwise as you incline? If not, I trust you will be very specific to me in your terms of refusal, as, on my credit and veracity, there is due on the 18/19 a dft. of S.'s £250, and £104, £300, and £42, 13s. 4d. to three other quarters, which *cannot* (having already been) be renewed in time, for which I am £310 short; and I shall pay none of them unless I can pay all.

"I hope you will give this a part of Sunday's consideration, and recollect your own stake indirectly in the concern should so great literary talent be dishonoured. With your disgust to the measure I can heartily sympathize, but having done all in my own power, and ridden off about four inches of skin, I shall not make myself further miserable in the matter.—I am, my dear Sir, ever sincerely yours, J. BALLANTYNE.

"I went to Kelso immediately on getting the £400 Waverley bill, which was cashed without a moment's hesitation."

MR. SCOTT to MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND CO.

"ABBOTSFORD, 22*d Oct.* 1814.

"DEAR SIRS,—I had your letter with the list of bills, which is quite satisfactory. I have written to Mr. Ballantyne to call upon you and make the renewals in the way that your convenience and the facilities of discount render most advisable. I presume it may be advisable to transfer part of the credit due upon the three Swift bills to some of the others, so as to get the whole out of the market so much sooner. But of this you mercantile gentlemen are best judges. I have many reasons for wishing to have these transactions as much as possible under my own eye, and will be obliged to you to apply to me directly when the least dilemma occurs. I think I stated in my last letter *distinctly* that I had not the *least intention* of giving you any trouble in the way of accommodation, for which, indeed, I do not foresee I shall have the least occasion; our present and future agreements

are, of course, regulated by their own terms, and I shall be at all times most desirous that you should derive benefit from them corresponding to the advantage you have afforded us by assisting credit during the last twelvemonth. I state this very distinctly, because I wish you to be convinced of it. The accompt of Waverley is very properly given, and I trust we will have more to settle on the same terms. I trust little odds and ends will cover the 10 per cent. which, if I mistake not, is a general arrangement with your London agents. I expect Mr. John Murray here in a day or two, which trifling circumstance I mention to put you upon your guard against any gossip your brethren in the trade are very active in setting afloat. His visit relates to matters in which my Edinburgh friends have not and cannot have any concern.—I remain, dear Sirs, your obedt. servant,

"WALTER SCOTT."

CHAPTER III.

"Accommodation"—Bankers remonstrate—Death of Mrs. Constable—Letter from Mr. Gibson—London Sale—More cheering prospects—Mr. John Carstairs—Guy Mannering published in London—Device for getting rid of heavy stock of John Ballantyne and Co.—Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk—The Field of Waterloo—The Antiquary—The First Series of Tales of My Landlord (Old Mortality and The Black Dwarf) published by Messrs. Murray and Blackwood.

THE secession of Mr. Hunter from the firm of Constable and Co. in 1811, and the death of his successor, Mr. Cathcart, in the following year, withdrew a large portion of that capital which, with rapidly increasing business, was always becoming more necessary for its comfortable management; and the following extracts from correspondence between my father and Mr. Cadell indicate that the firm had been seriously embarrassed by the extent of accommodation afforded to Mr. Scott. They found it necessary, for the time at least, to restrict their "assisting credit."

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

"*October* 15, 1814.

"I fear you will think I have resolved to put you to torment and vexation. God knows it is as little my wish as it is my interest; but you know I have always gone upon the principle of telling my mind and the truth that was in it.

"Do not be gloomy upon this prologue—with the idea

of my saying anything that will be unhingeing to you; but I have about an hour since been made acquainted with some matters that preclude my resting one night without telling you of them. Mr. Gibson has just called, and tells me that upon other matters which he had to ask to-day at Mr. Gilchrist, that gentleman took occasion to question him very roundly upon our concerns. I will give you the conversation as near as I recollect it. Mr. Gilchrist said, 'What do you think of Constable and Co.'s business? I am afraid they are going too deep. Their transactions are getting very large, and much beyond their foundation.' Our good friend answered that we had great property in Edinburgh Review, Encyclopædia Britannica, etc. 'That is all very true,' it was answered, 'but they are far beyond their means, and they *must cut down.* 'Suppose,' continued he, 'that the head of the concern dies, who gets them through their great engagements and undertakings?' The reply made was, The life insurances. 'That,' resumed the banker, 'may satisfy you and themselves, but will not satisfy the public.' Our friend dwelt much upon our advances and outlays, and that we were reducing fast. He rejoined, 'They must reduce their *accommodations.* I have no fault to find with themselves; their transactions are well and properly conducted; but I repeat, these are beyond their footing, and they *must be moderated.*'

"This is as near the state of the matter as I can come, and I assure you I have not left out one word that I think was intended to convey a strong meaning. Mr. Gibson assured me again and again that the whole conversation

was in the most friendly humour, and not a word of anything tending in the least to hurt us was uttered, but the most pressing advice to moderate our concerns. I asked Mr. Gibson to state the matter to you himself, which he is to do by this post."

On the 16th Mr. Cadell adds, "I do not think our Scott and Ballantyne connexion is doing us much good in any quarter just now,—there are so many bills running that must soon come round, as your lists will show. From the end of this month to the end of November there are six bills to pay and turn over somehow or other. . . . We have not under £2500 to pay to these people and their principal, and we must make a point of paying all of them off. Nothing else will do."

My father, who was in London at this time, raising funds by the sale of stock, and a transaction which he successfully carried through with Messrs. Longman, by which they once more became sharers in the property of the Edinburgh Review, replied as follows to Mr. Cadell's disturbing communication:—

"LONDON, *Oct.* 18.

"I have your letter of Saturday, and lament part of the contents of it. So far as the opinion of Mr. Gilchrist is concerned, I have only to say I have hitherto done all for the best, and if success should ultimately destroy me I cannot help it. I am as much aware of the necessity of cutting down our concerns as any one, and that necessity does not appear the less because others see it. Hitherto I have done in everything to the utmost of my ability in

the present season of accumulated distress. I hope I shall be enabled to persevere. Any other feeling and any other determination would do no good, but much harm. *Impossibilities* must not however be reckoned upon. I repeat, whatever is *possible* I shall do all I can to accomplish.

"I am quite willing to sell off to a very limited concern,—indeed, anything rather than eternal torment; but then, how is this to be done? We have a large concern, it is true, but who would not have purchased the Encyclopædia Britannica under our then circumstances? Who could have reckoned on the death of partners so near each other, and to us so important? If misfortune should follow misfortune, we cannot help it. All that is now to be done is to pay off, and get into as quiet water as possible, but—desirable as it is—to attempt this too rapidly may bring ruin, and even greater ruin than our allowing things to go to the utmost extremity. I have not acted dishonourably to any one in my dealings. If I have embarked largely in bookselling, have I not been encouraged to do so? I have, it is true, been most unfortunate in following many plans more for the benefit of my connexions than of myself; and how have I been used for it! In my present connexion with you I have been most fortunate, but not more so than I ever feel or acknowledge. If banks and bankers, after giving the support they have done, withdraw it during, I may say, the most prosperous career of our business, we must submit—doing all we can in the meantime to prevent it; and if mischief should hereafter come, I trust in God it

shall be when we have fewer dependent on us. Do not suppose, my dear sir, that I can be anything else than satisfied with your writing me plainly and explicitly; but the same theme does not need to be repeated daily. I shall write to Mr. Gibson in a day or two. His letter received to-day is another proof of his disinterested friendship towards us.

"We must cut all connexion that is possible with the Ballantynes and Mr. Scott, though I think we are this next half-year to be benefited greatly by the latter. The new poem is very much inquired after already. Longman and Co. have great hopes of it. I trust we are not to be disappointed."

In aggravation of the financial troubles pressing on him at this time, my father earnestly desired to be at home, where my mother was alarmingly ill, and, though he knew it not, at the point of death;[1] it was under these depressing influences that he wrote as follows to Mr. Cadell:—"Were it by any means in my power I would sell everything I possess, and retire to some quiet corner, if to live in little better than poverty, I hope in peace, and out of the world's eye. I should be content with very small matters; I desire nothing so much; you are in a situation of plague and botheration, but a young man without a family. What is my situation at the present moment? Certainly deplorable. There may be others in a still more distressing situation, but I hope few who, at this time of day, ought to have been otherwise. The fault, I know, is my own; fortune put it in my power to

[1] She died on the 28th October 1814.

be independent, but I overlooked the opportunity, and most grievously mistook the way, and am still blundering."

On hearing of my mother's death, Sir James Gibson-Craig (then Mr. Gibson) wrote as follows:—

"EDINBURGH, *Oct.* 29, 1814.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—Your kind heart would be most deeply affected by the accounts of the death of Mrs. Constable. . . . . Your grief, however, must give way to the strong call of duty which is now laid upon you to your family, and I trust you will exert yourself to do for them what nobody else can do—to be a father to them, in the broadest sense of that relationship. . . . .

"I hope you will not think of leaving London. Your presence there is most essential. I rejoice to hear you have been so successful in your transactions, which I have communicated generally to our friends Gilchrist and Forrester, who also rejoiced. Such communications, made in the way in which from my friendly intercourse with them, I can make them, are of essential importance, and you know I always rejoice in an opportunity of promoting your views.

"To your family it is of the utmost consequence that you should not quit London till your business is completed, and you must not do so. If, with the agitation into which you must be thrown, you should attempt to come down hurriedly, I have no doubt you would endanger your life, of which you are now more than ever bound to be careful. Best compliments to your son, from, dear Constable, your most affectionate friend,

"JAMES GIBSON."

Of this letter my father writes to Mr Cadell:—

"I received Mr. Gibson's most kind letter this morning; it afforded me great consolation, and added much to the heavy load of obligation his most sincere and active friendship has long laid me under. I again repeat my high sense of your kind attention; and that no similar calamity as that under which my spirits now labour may ever reach you, is the ardent prayer of, my dear Sir, your greatly obliged and attached friend, ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

On the 7th of November, having been successful in raising in London, by sales of copyright and stock, a sum not far short of £15,000, my father inclines to take a more hopeful view of the prospects of a business which he himself had created, and which he certainly understood. He wrote to his partner as follows:—

"*Nov.* 7, 1814.

"On the subject of our business and its extent I am inclined to say a word or two—

"1*st*, Is not the Encyclopædia our greatest concern—the best we ever had, and worth all the rest?

"2*d*, Had we ever more popular works than Alison, Sinclair, and Waverley—not to mention The Lord of the Isles, which must sell to a great extent?

"3*d*, Is not the Supplement to the Encyclopædia Britannica one of the best speculations ever projected or undertaken by any house in Europe; and could the same literary assistance have been commanded by any other establishment in the empire?

"4*th*, Does there exist in bookselling at the present moment any project better devised, or for which arrange-

ments are more complete, than the Edinburgh Gazetteer? and will it not be a work of most universal sale?

"5*th*, Will the profits on these works, if successfully carried through, not be a fortune, and more than represent the property of the partners our business has lost?

"6*th*, Have we any other speculations in hand worth speaking about? and have we not the offer of everything good that occurs?

"7*th*, Would men of the least enterprise or sense not have entered into the same speculations, if they had had the opportunity, that we have done?

"8*th*, How has it happened that all these good things have got into the same channel? Has it been by chance, accident, good luck, ill-luck, or the money our partners brought us? Has there not been a great property made in a few years, upon no original foundation? and if the thing is still going on prosperously, why should we experience GREATLY LIMITED ACCOMMODATION?

"9*th*, Is the business not better managed now than at any former period? I shall not compliment you on this occasion by saying by whom.

"*Lastly*, And after all, had I not been the most unwise man of your acquaintance I would have stuck to the *thing* as it was in 1803. I should not perhaps have made the same bustle in the world; but I should unquestionably have been more happy, my own small means less exposed to danger, and in my humble career I should have escaped many of the troubles and much of the vile ingratitude and impertinence which have fallen to my lot. If after the labour of a long voyage, and much anxiety as a pilot,

the vessel should now be on the rocks, and in danger of being sunk, I cannot help it, and can only regret that the command had not been long ago in better hands. I sincerely hope and pray for a better result, but whatever it shall be, if disappointment follow, I hope the loss will only ultimately fall on me and mine.

"If you have applied to the Bank of Scotland, I sincerely pray for your success, though it is one of the last places to which I would have had recourse. They once, I dare say, thought us more wealthy than our neighbours. Narrow minds and limited views may now make them think us much less so. There is a medium in all things. I only wish I had thought a little more on that subject years ago, and less of pleasing poets and their friends—but of all this enough for one letter."

On the following day my father succeeded in establishing relations with Mr. John Carstairs of Abchurch Lane, which he announced in the following terms:—

"I have just returned from having arranged an account and credit with one of the most respectable men in London, whose name has sometimes passed through our books, and is well known in the money market of Edinburgh; and what forms an agreeable part of the arrangement is, that we owe the thing entirely to our own good name, and to the character of our undertakings, without the immediate introduction of any friend. I dare say you have often heard of Mr. John Carstairs of Abchurch Lane. He is a relation and great friend of Professor Leslie, a man of Fife, who made his way early in life out of 'The Kingdom,' and has made a very handsome fortune. I had

long known Mr. C. by reputation, as I had reason to believe he had me; and after some weeks of deliberation, I mustered courage to have an interview with him, which I had this morning, with complete success.

"I assure you, my good friend, this is no small lift, and I am truly thankful for my success. A direct application was more becoming than an introduction by a friend; and I am quite glad that it was not necessary to have recourse to such."

Two months later my father writes:—"If we only had two or three years comfortably over our heads, I do not anticipate anything but smooth water afterwards. It is needless to say what might or what might not have been; but had the whole capital that the business had created for itself at January 1811 remained till this day, we should have been strong indeed."

In the embarrassed state of Mr. Scott's affairs, and those of John Ballantyne and Co., it became necessary that aid should be sought in other quarters, and the following extract from Mr. Lockhart's Life of his father-in-law indicates the constraining circumstances which led to Guy Mannering—Mr. Scott's next novel—not being published in Edinburgh:—

"Guy Mannering was published on the 24th February (1815)—that is, exactly two months after the Lord of the Isles was dismissed from the author's desk.[1] . . .

"The approach of Christmas 1814 brought with it the prospect of such a recurrence of difficulties about the discount of John's bills, as to render it absolutely necessary that Scott should either apply again

[1] The Lord of the Isles appeared in January 1815.

for assistance to his private friends, or task his literary powers with some such extravagant effort as has now been recorded. The great object, which was still to get rid of the heavy stock that had been accumulated before the storm of May 1813, at length determined the chief partner to break up, as soon as possible, the concern which his own sanguine rashness, and the gross irregularities of his mercurial lieutenant, had so lamentably perplexed; but Constable, having already enabled the firm to avoid public exposure more than once, was not now, any more than when he made his contract with the Lord of the Isles, disposed to burden himself with an additional load of Weber's Beaumont and Fletcher, and other almost as unsaleable books. While they were still in hopes of overcoming his scruples, it happened that a worthy friend of Scott's, the late Mr. Charles Erskine, his sheriff-substitute in Selkirkshire, had immediate occasion for a sum of money which he had some time before advanced, at Scott's personal request, to the firm of John Ballantyne and Company; and on receiving his application, Scott wrote as follows:—

"'To Mr. John Ballantyne, Bookseller, Edinburgh.

"'ABBOTSFORD, *Oct.* 14, 1814.

"'DEAR JOHN,—Charles Erskine wishes his money, as he has made purchase of land. This is a new perplexity—for paid he must be forthwith, as his advance was friendly and confidential. I do not at this moment see how it is to be raised, but believe I shall find means. In the meanwhile it will be necessary to propitiate the Leviathans of Paternoster Row. My idea is, that you or James should write to them to the following effect:—That a novel is offered you by the Author of Waverley; that the Author is desirous it should be out before Mr. Scott's poem, or as soon thereafter as possible; and that having resolved, as they are aware, to relinquish publishing, you only wish to avail yourselves of this offer to the extent of helping off some of your stock. I leave it to you to consider whether you should condescend on any particular work to offer them as bread to their butter—or on any particular amount—as £500. One thing must be provided, that Constable shares to the extent of the Scottish sale; they, however, managing. My reason for letting them have this scent of roast meat is, in case it should be necessary for us to apply to them to renew bills in December.—Yours, W. S.'

"Upon receiving this letter, John Ballantyne suggested to Scott that he should be allowed to offer, not only the new novel, but the next edition of Waverley, to Longman, Murray, or Blackwood—in the

hope that the prospect of being let in to the profits of the already established favourite, would overcome effectually the hesitation of one or other of these houses about venturing on the encumbrance which Constable seemed to shrink from with such pertinacity; but upon this ingenious proposition Scott at once set his *veto*:—'Dear John,' he writes (Oct. 17, 1814), 'your expedients are all wretched, as far as regards me. I never will give Constable, or any one, room to say I have broken my word with him in the slightest degree. If I lose everything else, I will at least keep my honour unblemished; and I do hold myself bound in honour to offer him a Waverley, while he shall continue to comply with the conditions annexed. I intend the new novel to operate as something more permanent than a mere accommodation; and if I can but be permitted to do so, I will print it before it is sold to any one, and then propose, first to Constable and Longman; second to Murray and Blackwood—to take the whole at such a rate as will give them one-half of the fair profits; granting acceptances which, upon an edition of 3000, which we shall be quite authorized to print, will amount to an immediate command of £1500; and to this we may couple the condition that they must take £500 or £600 of the old stock. I own I am not solicitous to deal with Constable alone, nor am I at all bound to offer him the new novel on any terms; but he, knowing of the intention, may expect to be treated with, at least, although it is possible we may not deal. However, if Murray and Blackwood were to come forward with any handsome proposal as to the stock, I should certainly have no objection to James's giving the pledge of the Author of Waverley for his next work. You are like the crane in the fable, when you boast of not having got anything from the business; you may thank God that it did not bite your head off. Would to God I were at let-a-be for let-a-be,—but you have done your best, and so must I.—Yours truly,

'W. S.'

"Both Mr. Murray, and Longman's partner, Mr. Rees, were in Scotland about this time, and the former at least paid Scott a visit at Abbotsford. Of course, however, whatever propositions they may have made, were received by one or other of the Ballantynes. The result was that the house of Longman undertook Guy Mannering on the terms dictated by Scott—namely, granting bills for £1500, and relieving John Ballantyne and Company of stock to the extent of £500 more; and Constable's first information of the transaction was from Messrs. Longman themselves, when they, in compliance with

Scott's wish, as signified in the letter last quoted, offered him a share in the edition which they had purchased." [1]

Guy Mannering was received with intense interest and universal favour. The first edition, consisting of 2000 copies, was sold the day after publication, and before the Memoir of its author was issued, in 1837, the sale in this country alone had reached 50,000 copies.

MR. SCOTT to MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE.

"EDINR., 26*th Feby.* 1815—*Sunday*, 3 *o'clock.*

"DEAR JOHN,—I have been thinking over the plan which I have lately pursued, and talked over this morning, of making our good stock carry off our heavy by attaching so much of it to future editions of *moving* publications so far as they have not already paid a toll of this nature, and which must clear the stock in time, while we enjoy the benefit of credit upon print and paper of the new editions at the same time, and in a way advantageous both to us and the booksellers. But it has occurred to me that there is a better and more summary mode of winding up, and which would effectually end these matters:—

"Suppose Constable and Longman would take our whole stock (say £10,000, being £5000 each) at the following terms:—

Bills for	12 months	to be immediately	granted for	£2000
Do.	15 months	,,	,,	2000
Do.	18 months	,,	,,	2000
Do.	21 months	,,	,,	2000
Do.	24 months	,,	,,	2000
				£10,000

[1] See Life, vol. iii. pp. 321-24.

"Should they be disposed to do this, J. B. and Coy. shut shop instantly, and leave the field clear, turning over to the purchasers the works of every description which they have now the advantage of publishing, on the sole terms of printing in the Canongate, and giving the authors half profits. I am morally convinced that, with the literary views I have before me, there will not be nearly so much advance of credit or capital on the booksellers' part in this way as in that which I had settled. I wish, if this strikes you as a feasible proposal to make to our friends, you would come up to breakfast to-morrow. Subordinate parts of the plan can easily be settled should the general principle suit, and it will render the London journey unnecessary. In future publications, unless in very particular circumstances, or with reasonable grounds of displeasure, which there is no chance of occurring, I will certainly consider these houses as my publishers, expecting only in courtesy some share of their countenance in P. O. As I shall always publish in future for half profit, there is no fear of my having the least temptation to change publishers, supposing me to have (as I have not) any wish to do so. I think within the same period the booksellers will probably take off the same quantity of stock upon the former plan, but this would cut the matter short, and promises, I think, advantages to both parties.—Yours, etc., W. S."

A letter from Sir Charles Bell, written in Brussels a fortnight after the battle of Waterloo, so excited Scott that he at once decided to visit the scene of our great

victory, and set out accordingly for the Continent, in company with three friends. Before leaving home he had arranged the plan of Paul's Letters to his Kinsfolk, and requested Mr. John Ballantyne to correspond with Messrs. Constable and Co. on the subject of the publication, which he did as follows:—

"TRINITY, 27*th July* 1815.

"DEAR SIRS,—Mr. Scott left town to-day for the Continent. He proposes writing from thence a series of letters on a peculiar plan, varied in matter and style, and to different supposititious correspondents.

"The work is to form a demy 8vo volume of twenty-two sheets, to sell at 12s. It is to be begun immediately on his arrival in France, and to be published, if possible, the second week of September, when he proposes to return.

"We print 3000 of this, and I am empowered to offer you one-third of the edition, Messrs. Longman and Co. and Mr. Murray having each the same share: the terms, twelve months' acceptance for paper and print, and half profits at six months, granted now as under. The over copies will pay the charge for advertising.—I am, etc.,

JOHN BALLANTYNE.

"*Charge*—

22 sheets printing, — £3, 15s. . .	. £82	10 0
145 reams demy, — 1, 10s. . .	. 217	10 0
	£300	0 0
3000 at 8s. £1200 0 0		
Cost, 300 0 0		
£900 0 0 profit—One-half is £450.		

"To Messrs. Constable and Co."

This offer was accepted, and the first edition of Paul's Letters, consisting of 6000 copies, appeared in January 1816, and was followed by two others, amounting together to 3000 copies. In the month of October 1815 Mr. Scott had given the public the first-fruits of his visit to the Continent in the poem The Field of Waterloo, the profits of the earliest editions having been paid to the fund for the widows and children of our soldiers who fell in that great battle. No better evidence of Scott's constitutional good-nature could be given than will be found in the strictures on this poem by James and John Ballantyne while it was passing through the press, and the genial manner in which he either agrees or declines to give effect to them.[1]

The Antiquary, which had been begun, Mr. Lockhart tells us, in the close of 1815, appeared early in May of the following year. It was published by my father on the usual terms, and there is no disclosure of disagreement between him and Mr. Scott in any correspondence of the period that I have seen; yet, even before its publication, John Ballantyne had been empowered by the author to negotiate with Mr. Murray and Mr. Blackwood for the first series of the Tales of My Landlord. Mr. Lockhart suggests as a reason for this contemplated deviation from the usual channel, that my father had been of late less liberal in his patronage of James Ballantyne and Co., and that he may have failed to satisfy Mr. Scott in the extent to which he was prepared to relieve the bookselling firm of unsold stock. He also alleges, as

[1] See Life, vol. iii. p. 382.

will be seen from the following quotation, that John Ballantyne, by disguising for selfish ends the real state of matters from his patron, had favoured this desertion. I find no proof of such double-dealing; and am inclined to think that Mr. Scott's necessities as a purchaser and improver of land are quite sufficient to account for, if not entirely to explain, his desire to extend the sphere of his publishing relations, and thereby increase the facilities for meeting pecuniary requirements.

The circumstance which really led to the temporary desertion by Mr. Scott of A. Constable and Co. is, I think, disclosed in the following extract of a letter from Mr. Cadell to his partner, of Oct. 11, 1815:—"I am afraid I have lost us an Antiquary or a Guy, but most unfortunately, in your absence however, I could not do otherwise under present circumstances. I told you of the £35 in mine of Sunday; Monday brought me a long story from John, enumerating that sum and several other *pinching* calls, and enclosing a bill for £175, covered by his own note payable in London, as a counterpoise and bait of course. I offered to accept his draft most cheerfully; but, placed as the single partner of a large concern, I could *not do it without a cover* of long bills, of which he said he had £600 which could be turned to no use. I annexed a note of bills for their use, which came to the enormous sum of £1800; but he told Fyfe, whom I sent to give our acceptance on long dates, that *all* his long bills were gone, detached my £1800 list from my letter, with a notandum that it was formerly much larger, and has this day sent to say that my accepting with a cover would do him no

good—keeping all the while my letter asking the cover, to show to Mr. Scott I have no doubt, who, by the way, I have found, is writing something *new*. John, to back his request, sent a note of Mr. S., who says in a *P.S.*, '*I have begun at odd times the* ——.' The words were entirely obliterated, so that I rather suspect it is something newer even than the Antiquary,—although it may be it, and he ashamed to own it is so far behind. I have thus most hurriedly given you the outline of this matter. I do not know if you approve, but I would, I think, do the same over again. We must get out, cost what it will: their fall *must* injure us, and with any sum like that I have noted, it must gravel us more than all the Antiquaries would do us good." Mr. Lockhart says :—

"Constable had been admitted, almost from the beginning,[1] into the *secret* of the Novels—and for that, among other reasons, it would have been desirable for the Novelist to have him continue the publisher without interruption; but Scott was led to suspect, that if he (Constable) were called upon to conclude a bargain for a fourth novel before the third had made its appearance, his scruples as to the matter of *printing* might at least protract the treaty; and why Scott should have been urgently desirous of seeing the transaction settled before the expiration of the half-yearly term of Whitsunday, is sufficiently explained by the fact that though so much of the old unfortunate stock of John Ballantyne and Co. still remained on hand—and with it some occasional recurrence of commercial difficulty as to *floating-bills* was to be expected—while James Ballantyne's management of the pecuniary affairs of the printing-house had continued to be highly negligent and irregular—nevertheless, the sanguine author had gone on purchasing one patch of land after another, until his estate at Abbotsford had already grown from 150 to nearly 1000 acres. The property all about his

[1] My father, as we have seen (p. 48 *ante*), at once discovered the authorship of Waverley on being shown the first portion of the work.

original farm had been in the hands of various small holders (Scottice *cock-lairds*); these persons were sharp enough to understand, ere long, that their neighbour could with difficulty resist any temptation that might present itself in the shape of an offer of more acres; and thus he proceeded buying up lot after lot of unimproved ground at extravagant prices,—his 'appetite increasing by what it fed on;' while the ejected yeomen set themselves down elsewhere to fatten at their leisure upon the profits—most commonly the anticipated profits —of 'the Scotch Novels.'

"He was ever and anon pulled up with a momentary misgiving,— and resolved that the latest acquisition should be the last until he could get rid entirely of 'John Ballantyne and Co.' But John Ballantyne was, from the utter lightness of his mind, his incapacity to look a day before him, and his eager impatience to enjoy the passing hour, the very last man in the world who could, under such circumstances, have been a serviceable agent. Moreover, John, too, had his professional ambition: he was naturally proud of his connexion, however secondary, with the publication of these works—and this connexion, though subordinate, was still very profitable; he must have suspected that, should his name disappear altogether from the list of booksellers, it would be a very difficult matter for him to retain any concern in them; and I cannot, on the whole, but consider it as certain that, the first and more serious embarrassments being overcome, he was far from continuing to hold by his patron's anxiety for the total abolition of their unhappy copartnership. He, at all events, unless when some sudden emergency arose, flattered Scott's own gay imagination, by uniformly representing everything in the most smiling colours; and though Scott, in his replies, seldom failed to introduce some passing hint of caution—such as '*Nullum numen abest si sit prudentia*'—he more and more took home to himself the agreeable cast of his *Rigdum's* anticipations, and wrote to him in a vein as merry as his own—*e.g.*—'As for our stock,

> 'Twill be wearing awa', John,
> Like snaw-wreaths when it's thaw, John,' etc. etc. etc.

"I am very sorry, in a word, to confess my conviction that John Ballantyne, however volatile and light-headed, acted at this period with cunning selfishness, both by Scott and by Constable. He well knew that it was to Constable alone that his firm had more than once owed its escape from utter ruin and dishonour; and he must also have known, that had a fair straightforward effort been made for

that purpose, after the triumphant career of the Waverley series had once commenced, nothing could have been more easy than to bring all the affairs of his 'back-stock, etc.' to a complete close, by entering into a distinct and candid treaty on that subject, in connexion with the future works of the great Novelist, either with Constable or with any other first-rate house in the trade. But John, foreseeing that, were that unhappy concern quite out of the field, he must himself subside into a mere clerk of the printing company, seems to have parried the blow by the only arts of any consequence in which he ever was an adept. He appears to have systematically disguised from Scott the extent to which the whole Ballantyne concern had been sustained by Constable—especially during his Hebridean tour of 1814, and his Continental one of 1815—and prompted and enforced the idea of trying other booksellers from time to time, instead of adhering to Constable, merely for the selfish purposes,—first, of facilitating the immediate discount of bills; secondly, of further perplexing Scott's affairs, the entire disentanglement of which would have been, as he fancied, prejudicial to his own personal importance.

"It was resolved, accordingly, to offer the risk and half profits of the first edition of another new novel—or rather collection of novels—not to Messrs. Constable but to Mr. Murray of Albemarle Street, and Mr. Blackwood, who was then Murray's agent in Scotland; but it was at the same time resolved, partly because Scott wished to try another experiment on the public sagacity, but partly also, no question, from the wish to spare Constable's feelings, that the title-page of the 'Tales of My Landlord' should not bear the magical words 'By the Author of Waverley.' The facility with which both Murray and Blackwood embraced such a proposal, as no untried novelist, being sane, could have dreamt of hazarding, shows that neither of them had any doubt as to the identity of the author. They both considered the withholding of the avowal on the forthcoming title-page as likely to check very much the first success of the book; but they were both eager to prevent Constable's acquiring a sort of prescriptive right to publish for the unrivalled novelist, and willing to disturb his tenure at this additional, and, as they thought it, wholly unnecessary risk.

"How sharply the unseen parent watched this first negotiation of his *Jedediah Cleishbotham*, will appear from one of his letters:—

"'To Mr. John Ballantyne, Hanover Street, Edinburgh.

"'ABBOTSFORD, *April* 29, 1816.

"'DEAR JOHN,—James has made one or two important mis-

takes in the bargain with Murray and Blackwood: Briefly as follows:—

"'1*stly*. Having only authority from me to promise 6000 copies, he proposes they shall have the copyright *for ever*. I will see their noses cheese first.

"'2*dly*. He proposes I shall have twelve months' bill—I have always got six. However, I would not stand on that.

"'3*dly*, He talks of volumes being put into the publisher's hands to consider and decide on. No such thing; a bare perusal at St. John Street only.

"'Then for omissions—it is NOT stipulated that we supply the paper and print of successive editions. This must be nailed, and not left to understanding. Secondly, I will have London bills as well as Blackwood's.

"'If they agree to these conditions, good and well. If they demur, Constable must be instantly tried; giving half to the Longmans, and *we* drawing on *them* for that moiety, or Constable lodging their bill in our hands. You will understand it is a four-volume touch—a work totally different in style and structure from the others; a new cast, in short, of the net which has hitherto made miraculous draughts. I do not limit you to terms, because I think you will make them better than I can do. But he must do more than others, since he will not or cannot print with us. For every point but that, I would rather deal with Constable than any one; he has always shown himself spirited, judicious, and liberal. Blackwood must be brought to the point *instantly;* and *whenever* he demurs, Constable must be treated with; for there is no use in suffering the thing to be blown on. At the same time, you need not conceal from him that there were some proposals elsewhere, but you may add, with truth, I would rather close with him.—Yours truly, W. S.

"'*P.S.*—I think Constable should jump at this affair: for I believe the work will be very popular.'

"Messrs. Murray and Blackwood agreed to all the author's conditions here expressed. They also relieved John Ballantyne and Co. of stock to the value of £500;[1] and Mr. Murray at least must, moreover, have subsequently consented to anticipate the period of his payments."

[1] See Life, vol. iv. pp. 15-20.

CHAPTER IV.

Mr. John Ballantyne—Letters on the History of Scotland—Harold the Dauntless—Rob Roy—Clearance of "the Augean Stable"—Second Series of Tales of My Landlord, The Heart of Midlothian—The Regalia.

THIS occasional desertion by Mr. Scott, to whatever it may be attributed, and disappointing as it must have been to Constable and Co.,[1] led to no open breach, and John Ballantyne wrote the following letter to the firm from Paris on 8th August 1816 :—

"PARIS, *8th August* 1816.

"DEAR SIRS,—I imagine your surprise when you see a letter from across the water, unless you know 'the sweet little roman hand.' O yes, these are your 'c's and your *u*'s and your *t*,' *bien connu* ;—and weel missed for the last seven weeks, I daresay my friend Mr. Cadell thinks. I could wager anything that before he has got this length, he has said, 'And we would not have got a letter now, unless there had been a snifter in 't'—and so there is.

[1] I find in a letter from Mr. Cadell to my father, of 3d December 1816, the following passage :—"All and sundry recognise the author of *The Tales*, and I may say they are almost universally admired. Some good judges say that the second—Old Mortality—is the best of the author's productions. This I *will* say, that when we undertook the *History* and the *Register*, he should have told us of the other, and his reason for going elsewhere." Three days later : "Say nothing about the Tales of My Landlord ; things *will come round.*"

"The cash I got by Miss Hicks I could not wait to receive myself in London, and left to be done by Messrs. Hollingworth and Co. I have just heard from them, however, that the other executor demurs paying without my receipt, for which I have neither the stamp here, nor know the terms if I had.

"Messrs. R. Allan and Son will not, therefore, have this stock (£350, 3 per cent. Cons.) as additional security on their advances on my bills, as I intended they should, and may therefore perhaps demur at paying my acceptance, £150, to you at their house on the 14th; my bills lying with them being of long date, although no doubt two months younger than when I left you. You may assure them, if you please, of having the documents of this stock put into their possession on my return as additional security on their advances, but I can do nothing for it at this moment.

"Perhaps for three months the matter may be arranged with James (who will do what is in his power on seeing this), in which case the transaction will be regularly closed by myself; but I trust you will have no trouble, by Messrs. Allan and Son discounting for me as much of what is in their hands as will pay the bill.

"I have so much to say respecting this ride o' mine (as the laird of Bonniemune would have said), that the remaining paper is inadequate to contain anything of what is to be seen and known here; I shall therefore postpone all particulars to the first dinner I have the pleasure to take at Craigleith; and I assure you there is so much genuine farce and absurdity in this chosen of

cities and its people, that the truth outruns all manner of invention—at least of any invention of mine.

"I am just now waiting certain small additions to my funds in order to be gone from here—for truly I am tired of it, and I trust to be off by the 17th. In the end of the month, therefore, I trust to have the pleasure of an audience up-stairs, by the fireside; till when, I am, as ever, very sincerely, your obliged and faithful servant, JOHN B.

"I don't sign my name here. My very best compliments to Ro., who, as well as the head of the Co., would be rarities here, from the jollification of their figures. Even *I* pass for something in Paris, amongst the expanded scissors you meet walking about in the human form."

The First Series of the Tales of My Landlord, embracing Old Mortality and the Black Dwarf, appeared on 1st December 1816, and within two months after publication three editions had been printed, of 2000 copies each. About this time Lockhart tells us Mr. Scott had "concluded a negotiation with Constable and Longman for a series of Letters on the History of Scotland, of which, however, if he ever wrote any part, the MS. has not been discovered."[1] The following extracts from his correspondence with my father, having reference to this project—realized at a later date by the Tales of a Grandfather, may be read with interest:—

[1] In a letter from Mr. Cadell, of 26th June 1816, there occurs the following sentence:—"I enclose a copy of the agreement as to the History of Scotland, which you may want. Do not let L. and Co. off one *bodle* of this bargain. They should as well as we take a share of the burdens attending Mr. Scott and his concerns."

"ABBOTSFORD, *10th October* 1816.

"DEAR SIR,—I am favoured with your letter, and readily agree to advertising the History. The title, I think, should be Letters on the History of Scotland, addressed to a Family of Young Persons. By the Author of Paul's Letters from the Continent."

On the 26th October he writes again on the same subject, in reply to a letter from my father, of which unfortunately I do not possess a copy:—

"DEAR SIR,—I have no objection to your title—indeed, I think it better than my own, only I would wish it to be added, that the Letters were written for the instruction of a rising family, which is really the truth. I believe I mentioned to you the strong reasons which I have for not giving my name at full length, though I have no objection to your telling the whole world that I wrote it. Believe me, that although a more immediate impression might be made by treating the work with that formality, it would most inevitably lead to great disappointment in the public, and injure the book seriously. When a man puts his name to so grave a matter as a History, it should be something very different from the rapid and, I trust, animated sketch which I intend to furnish. Men would expect great depth of research and discussion of the disputed points, which is precisely what I intend to waive. I have not the least doubt that I will make a popular book, for I trust it will be both interesting and useful; but I never intended to engage in any proper historical labour, for which I have neither time, talent, nor inclina-

tion. I think you may remember that the Letters on the History of England were what I proposed as my model. In truth it would take ten years of any man's life to write such a History of Scotland as he should put his name to. But as I said before, I have no doubt mine will be found useful, and, I think, entertaining. I assure you I judge what I think for the best, and I would not for any caprice of my own stand in the way even of your wishes, much less of your interest. Both our interests, however, are equally concerned, and upon the most mature consideration I have been able to give the subject, I cannot alter my first resolution, that the babe must be unchristened. The difference between the popularity or unpopularity of a work often depends on the reader's expectations being too much excited, or on his finding unexpected pleasure where there was no parade of promise.

"I am glad the affair of the bill was so far cleared up, though I am sorry it should have occurred at all in these troublesome times. We are all busied with getting in our harvest, such as it is. I suppose, like Burns's old woman, we shall win the kirn on Hallowe'en, which I used to think an improbability in the poem.—I am, dear Sir, very much yours, WALTER SCOTT."

Early in 1817, A. Constable and Co. published for Mr. Scott his poem of Harold the Dauntless. I possess no record of its commercial success, but Mr. Lockhart says it was "considerable." There were many friendly letters from Mr. Scott to my father about this period, but none

of them appear to me of sufficient interest for quotation. The following, however, are important as relating to the novel of Rob Roy, whose title, Lockhart tells us, my father had suggested. They are extracted from Scott's Life:[1]—

"WALTER SCOTT to JOHN BALLANTYNE.

"'ABBOTSFORD, *Monday* [*April* 1817].

"'DEAR JOHN,—I have a good subject for a work of fiction *in petto*. What do you think Constable would give for a smell of it? You ran away without taking leave the other morning, or I wished to have spoken to you about it. I don't mean a continuation of Jedediah, because there might be some delicacy in putting that by the original publishers. You may write if anything occurs to you on this subject. It will not interrupt my History. By the way, I have a great lot of the Register ready for delivery and no man asks for it. I shall want to pay up some cash at Whitsunday, which will make me draw on my brains.—Yours truly, W. SCOTT.'

"TO THE SAME.

"'ABBOTSFORD, *Saturday, May* 3, 1817.

"'DEAR JOHN,—I shall be much obliged to you to come here with Constable on Monday, as he proposes a visit, and it will save time. By the way, you must attend that the usual quantity of stock is included in the arrangement—that is, £600 for 6000 copies. My sum is £1700, payable in May—a round advance, by'r Lady, but I think I am entitled to it, considering what I have twined off hitherto on such occasions.

"'I make a point on your coming with Constable, health allowing. —Yours truly, W. S.'

"The result of this meeting is indicated in a note, scribbled by John Ballantyne at the bottom of the foregoing letter, before it was seen by his brother the printer:—

"'*Half-past 3 o'clock, Tuesday.*

"'DEAR JAMES,—I am at this moment returned from Abbotsford, with entire and full success. Wish me joy. I shall gain above £600

[1] Vol. iv. pp. 66-70.

—Constable taking my share of stock also. The title is *Rob Roy —by the Author of Waverley ! ! !*[1] Keep this letter for me.

"'J. B.'

"On the same page there is written, in fresher ink,—which marks, no doubt, the time when John pasted it into his collection of private papers now before me—

"'N.B.—I did gain above £1200.—J. B.'

"Mr. Puff might well exult in the 'full and entire success' of his trip to Abbotsford. His friend had made it a *sine qua non* with Constable that he should have a third share in the bookseller's moiety of the bargain—and though Johnny had no more trouble about the publishing or selling of Rob Roy than his own Cobbler of Kelso, this stipulation had secured him a *bonus* of £1200, before two years passed. Moreover, one must admire his adroitness in persuading Constable, during their journey back to Edinburgh, to relieve him of that fraction of his own old stock, with which his unhazardous share in the new transaction was burdened. Scott's kindness continued, as long as John Ballantyne lived, to provide for him a constant succession of similar advantages at the same easy rate; and Constable, from deference to Scott's wishes, and from his own liking for the humorous auctioneer, appears to have submitted with hardly a momentary grudge to this heavy tax on his most important ventures."[2]

Three months before the appearance of Rob Roy, I find correspondence initiated on the subject of the Second Series of the Tales of My Landlord. Whether the account given by Mr. Lockhart[3] of John Ballantyne's intromissions on this occasion be literally correct or no, I cannot say, but I shall quote it here, and follow it up with several letters in my own collection, which throw additional light on the transaction:—

[1] Mr. Lockhart tells us (Life, vol. iv. p. 68), "The title of this novel was suggested by Constable, and he told me years afterwards the difficulty he had to get it adopted by the author."

[2] Life, vol. iv. pp. 69, 70. [3] *Ibid.* vol. iv. pp. 108-110.

"Scott desired John Ballantyne to propose to Constable and Co. a second series of the Tales of My Landlord, to be comprised, like the first, in four volumes, and ready for publication by 'the King's Birth-day,' that is, the 4th of June 1818. 'I have hungered and thirsted,' he wrote, 'to see the end of those shabby borrowings among friends; they have all been wiped out except the good Duke's £4000—and I will not suffer either new offers of land or anything else to come in the way of that clearance. I expect that you will be able to arrange this resurrection of Jedediah, so that £5000 shall be at my order.'

"Mr. Rigdum used to glory in recounting that he acquitted himself on this occasion with a species of dexterity not contemplated in his commission. He well knew how sorely Constable had been wounded by seeing the first Tales of Jedediah published by Murray and Blackwood, and that the utmost success of Rob Roy would only double his anxiety to keep them out of the field, when the hint should be dropped that a second MS. from Gandercleuch might shortly be looked for. John therefore took a convenient opportunity to mention the new scheme as if casually—so as to give Constable the impression that the author's purpose was to divide the second series also between his old rival in Albemarle Street, of whom his jealousy was always sensitive, and his neighbour Blackwood, whom, if there had been no other grudge, the recent conduct and rapidly increasing sale of his Magazine would have been sufficient to make Constable hate with a perfect hatred. To see not only his old Scots Magazine eclipsed, but the authority of the Edinburgh Review itself bearded on its own soil by this juvenile upstart, was to him gall and wormwood; and, moreover, he himself had come in for his share in some of those grotesque *jeux d'esprit* by which at this period Blackwood's young Tory wags delighted to assail their elders and betters of the Whig persuasion. To prevent the proprietor of this new journal from acquiring anything like a hold on the Author of Waverley, and thus competing with himself not only in periodical literature, but in the highest of the time, was an object for which, as John Ballantyne shrewdly guessed, Constable would have made at that moment almost any sacrifice. When, therefore, the haughty but trembling bookseller—'The Lord High Constable' (as he had been dubbed by these jesters)—signified his earnest hope that the second Tales of My Landlord were destined to come out under the same auspices with Rob Roy, the plenipotentiary answered with an air of deep regret, that he feared it would be impossible for the author

to dispose of the work—unless to publishers who should agree to take with it *the whole* of the remaining stock of 'John Ballantyne and Co.;' and Constable, pertinaciously as he had stood out against many more modest propositions of this nature, was so worked upon by his jealous feelings, that his resolution at once gave way. He agreed on the instant to do all that John seemed to shrink from asking—and at one sweep cleared the Augean stable in Hanover Street, of unsaleable rubbish to the amount of £5270. I am assured by his surviving partner, that when he had finally redisposed of the stock, he found himself a loser by fully two-thirds of this sum.

"Burthened with this heavy condition, the agreement for the sale of 10,000 copies of the embryo series was signed before the end of November 1817."

From the following passage in a letter from Mr. Cadell to my father, dated 22d January 1818, it appears that Mr. Lockhart must have been mistaken in his version of the clearance of the Augean stable in Hanover Street, which does not appear to have been effected till a later period, in accordance with a suggestion made by my father's partner, who writes as follows:—"A good deal of thought has brought up some ideas as to Ballantyne's stock, which I have little doubt you will approve of—it is to possess it without any delay, and immediately print a *cheap* list or catalogue of the whole of it, along with any of our own heavy articles—say at 25 per cent. from sale, and circulate this throughout the whole kingdom, and, if necessary, push it by a traveller, . . . and the receipt of yours of the 19th makes one hope that Robinson might perhaps buy a large lot of Edinburgh Annual Registers in sets, and Swift—both for America. By these plans we may reduce this said stock, and get our own money for a considerable portion of it, packing the balance off at what it will bring.

"We will thus lay a strong claim on the author of the novels to prefer us to all others in time coming."

On the 21st September I find Mr. Scott writing from Abbotsford to my father:—

"*Sunday, 21st Sept.* 1817.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I hope you have not forgot your purpose of coming here. To-morrow I go to the Circuit, and about Thursday we expect some young people to attend the county ball. From Saturday onward we are totally disengaged, and will take care to continue so, when we know when to expect Miss Constable and you. We have every prospect of fine weather and a glorious harvest, after so many fears and tremors on that important subject. My cramps have been tormenting, but are now mitigated; I trust they are going off by degrees, as they have not near the violence of the attacks in spring.—I am, dear Sir, very truly yours, W. SCOTT.

"John Ballantyne, who, like a cat, can tumble out of a ten-pair of stairs window and light on his feet, is on his return here. I expect Bullock and him about Tuesday. John is in full feather and high spirits."

MR. SCOTT to MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE.

"ABBOTSFORD, *27th Sept.* [1817].

"DEAR JOHN,—You slipt away like a knotless thread the other morning. . . . I should wish one or two things

settled before Constable comes here, or at least put in train. The one is the terms on which he proposes to settle with Longman; we *must* have London bills; and what else he can want I am at a loss to guess. The other is your share, which may be fixed at one-fourth of the affair. It should also be mentioned that this matter must be kept *quite secret* till Rob Roy is out. Any neglect of prudence on this score will hurt both works. *That* all parties may be assured of.—Yours truly,

"W. SCOTT."

During a pleasant visit paid to Abbotsford by my father and his eldest daughter, who was married on the 14th October 1817 to his partner, Mr. Robert Cadell, preliminaries were arranged for the publication of the Second Series of the Tales of My Landlord. The following letter records a fresh purchase of land by Mr. Scott:—

MR. SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, 11*th October* 1817.

"DEAR SIR,—I have to return you my best thanks for the curious letters—one by my father's grandfather, the Laird of Newmains; one respecting Harden, who appears to have been, like some of his descendants, occasionally short of cash. They are, however, a thriving generation in their way, and taking them on the whole. I have bought Toftfield, which will clear the *sporran* which you have so lately filled. I fancy, by the very curious purse you have so obligingly given me, you had a mind to give me a hint how to keep my cash; for if I once could put

it into Rob Roy's leathern convenience, I defy any one to find the means of getting it out again. Hitherto our united ingenuity has not been able to find the mode of opening it. However, if I can put no money into the Highlandman's sporran, I can contrive to make them put some into mine, which is as much to the purpose.

"Our womankind request to be particularly remembered to Miss Constable, and are very happy she found Tweeddale agreeable. I send this by a packet to John B., and am, in haste, yours truly, WALTER SCOTT.

"The stone from Linlithgow is very curious."

The Messrs. Longman had declined to accept a share in The Tales on the terms proposed to them; and with reference to their declinature, and the Duke of Buccleuch's bond for £4000, Scott writes as follows to John Ballantyne:—

MR. SCOTT to MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE.

"*Sunday evening, 9th Nov.* 1817.

"Longman's answer must be considered as shutting the chequer with respect to the Tales. You can only regret it is not in your power to admit them into the bargain, as Mr. Constable takes upon the same terms as the others the share reserved for them, in consequence of their finally rejecting it, but whatever share he may be disposed to admit them to, whether with or without stock, you will be happy to consent to on the part of the author. Mr. Constable wrote to me that he proposes to make payment of

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the share reserved for Longman and Co., in good accepted bills or otherwise, so as to suit my convenience; you will therefore forthwith arrange with Mr. Cadell the day and manner in which the bond is to be taken up. The agreement states that from £4000 to £5000 is to be placed at my command at Martinmas, but if anything above £4000 be wanted, acceptances from the parties to myself will do well enough. You will lose no time in this matter; all our intercourse with the bond-holders having been through Mr. Cadell, he will of course take the trouble finally to close with them. I wish him joy of his change of condition, and hope soon to do it personally.

"The illness is quite off, but Clarkson says I must take a few days' holidays; they will be my last, for winter must be well and seriously employed.—Yours truly,

"W. S."

On the subject of the declinature by Messrs. Longman, Mr. Scott wrote as follows to my father:—

MR. SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, 10*th November* 1817.

"DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you half a letter, but afterwards thought it worth while to wait a final answer from Longman's house. I was not desirous to fling the door in their face, though indifferent to their thinking proper to shut it upon themselves. Their ultimate answer intimated a desire to take the share retained, *without* any part of the stock, on the terms settled with you. I have desired J. B. to reply that they having definitively declined the share and terms proposed, the whole bargain

was in consequence taken up by your house, who would be the proper persons to deal with as to the share and terms they might wish.[1] So you have the staff in your own hand, and, as you are on the spot, can manage it your own way. Depend on it, that, barring unforeseen illness or death, these will be the best volumes which have appeared. I pique myself on the first tale, which is called The Heart of Midlothian. I have been dreadfully broke in upon by company here, otherwise Rob Roy would have been out. But not having even a closet to be private in, my course has necessarily been retarded. But time lost shall, and indeed must, be made up, and you know how I can move upon a pinch. I have had a bad touch of the cramp on the change of weather, but it gave way to bleeding without any bad consequences—save the fright.

"Please to write to Mr. Cadell and send the needful for making up Longman's share of the bond-money. I shall want only £4000, unless I buy more land; but if I do this desperate deed, simple acceptances will serve for the odd £1000, stipulated to be payable at Martinmas if required. My neighbour Nicol Milne is *mighty* desirous

[1] Messrs. Longman very naturally felt annoyed by the issue of this negotiation, with regard to which Mr. Cadell quaintly expresses himself as follows:—"As to Longman and Co., I have no hesitation in admitting that it is our interest to keep well with them; and nothing would give me more uneasiness than to see any difference; but for the life of me I see no occasion for *any sacrifice on our part* to attain what is not in danger. They have themselves to blame for the want of the Tales, and may grumble as they choose; we have *Taggy by the tail*, and if we have influence to keep the best author of the day, we ought to do it."

I should buy, at a *mighty* high rate, some land between me and the lake, which lies *mighty* convenient, but I am *mightily* determined to give nothing more than the value, so that it is likely to end like the old proverb *Ex Nichilo Nichil fit.*

"I wish you sincerely joy of Miss Constable's very desirable settlement, which promises much happiness on all sides.

"There was a publication, within this year or two, of the music and songs connected with Shakespeare. You will oblige me greatly by procuring me a copy. When I next write to you, I will send under Mr. Freeling's cover a letter or two for authors in foreign parts, which I will commend to your attention in getting them forwarded.

"Please to address to Edinburgh, as I shall be there in the end of the week.—Yours truly,

"WALTER SCOTT.

"I find I have missed the post, so send to your friendly care, under Mr. Freeling's cover, two letters, one for Mr. Douce, whose present address you will learn at Longman's or Triphook's, and one for Madame Schubart, translator of some ballads of mine, which Bohn, the German bookseller in Covent Garden, will take care to send safe if you commend it to his charge.

"We have just received information of the great loss which the country has sustained. Under every point of view it is a fearful calamity."[1]

[1] The Princess Charlotte had died at Claremont on the 6th November 1817.

MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND CO. to MR. SCOTT.[1]

"EDINBURGH, 21*st Nov.* 1817.

"SIR,—In consequence of the conversation our Mr. Cadell had with you yesterday, the proper intimation has this day been given in writing agreeably to the tenor of the bond, and the whole sum of four thousand pounds will thus fall to be paid at the next term of Whitsunday.

"Having duly considered all the circumstances of this transaction, and what appear to be your wishes on the subject, besides putting the matter out of the reach of dispute or annoyance to any of the parties, we will take upon ourselves the obligation of making good this payment of £4000 sterling, at the next term of Whitsunday; and further, as this arrangement takes a large sum of negotiation, and keeps our name from appearing on bills to a considerable extent, in the transaction lately entered into with Mr. John Ballantyne, we engage also to pay the annuity on said bond for that period of six months, and to relieve you of all expenses and trouble attending it from this time; the legal steps being taken, we can insure the bond being put into your hands cancelled at May 1818. It being understood that this bond of £4000, when so paid or delivered up, goes in part of the sums to be made good by us in the transaction with Mr. John Ballantyne before alluded to. The proportions of the extra expense incurred in the present case we can realize from the other parties to the transaction. Your acknowledgment of this we presume will be quite sufficient. A. CONSTABLE AND CO."

[1] This letter is written in name of the firm by Mr. Cadell, his partner being at the time London.

MR. SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, *Decr.* 31, 1817.

"DEAR SIR,—I had a very bad touch of the cramp for about three weeks in November, which, with its natural attendants of dulness and weakness, made me unable to get our matters forward till last week, when all was ended so far as depended on me. I am resting myself here a few days before commencing my new labours, which will be untrodden ground, and, I think, pretty likely to succeed. I suppose you will soon leave town, in which case I will beg you to take the trouble of a small commission or two for me. You remember you said you thought you could get the new State Trials for me, and take my folios in exchange. I fancy Howel's is a very superior book. And if, in your walks, you can get me a copy of the music belonging to Shakespeare, which was published some short time ago, you will oblige me much, as I find it impossible to get it here.

"I think I have found out a remedy for my troublesome disorder; at any rate the nature of its recurring shows that it is not dangerous, as I at first apprehended.—Believe me, dear Sir, yours very truly, WALTER SCOTT."

This letter was written on the day on which Rob Roy was given to the public. The first edition consisted of 10,000 copies, and within three weeks after its publication a second of 3000 copies was at press.

On the 15th January 1818 Mr. Cadell writes:—"I had yesterday a call from the author of Rob Roy, looking as healthy as possible. He is to begin the new Tales imme-

diately after the funeral of James Ballantyne's mother. He wants all the tracts, pamphlets, etc., that we can get him about Captain Porteous's mob, for the tale, The Heart of Midlothian. He was in great glee; but as he stopped but a short time, I had scarcely an opportunity of more than hinting that three volumes now and three in autumn would very much increase the interest. I will get David to look among your books for all he can collect about Captain Porteous, and take them to him. I mentioned to Mr. S. that there was a German translation of Guy Mannering among David's collections in Germany, which I will get, and take to Castle Street. He wants to see David, who can call on him with the translations of the poems; but it would not do for him to take Guy, in case Mr. S. might feel hurt at the *exposé*." On the 30th of the same month Mr. Cadell writes:—"It gives me no small pleasure to inform you that the *new Tales of My Landlord* are at press!!! and, what is more, a considerable portion of them. The author says that he feels himself very strong with what he has now in hand. The report of such being forthcoming is gaining ground, but the author does not wish them announced for a long time yet, and I dare say he is right."

The trade were in great anxiety at this time—not, I fear, from altogether disinterested motives—about the health of Mr. Scott, and on February 6th Mr. Cadell, who, judging from his letters on the subject, had himself been one of the most despondent, sends the following comforting assurance to my father, then in London:—"*The Row* are all wrong about Mr. Scott. I saw his doctor yesterday, who said he was amazingly well,

and had not had the periodical return of cramp which he has been accustomed to have for some months past, which is considered a very good omen; and I hear from various quarters that he is in great glee, working away at the Tales. The first tale is to be The Heart of Midlothian; the second, the *Regalia*,[1] which was found on Wednesday. You have with this a full account from the Courant of yesterday, written by Mr. Scott." A portion of the original manuscript of this account is in my possession.

On the 12th February 1818, my father, who had been upwards of three years a widower, married Charlotte, daughter of the late John Neale, Esq., who had been a merchant in Edinburgh, and whose family had removed to England after his death. This event was hailed with unmingled satisfaction by his family and friends, and is thus referred to two days later by Mr. Cadell:—"I sit down with a new pen and a sheet of particular paper to tender to you and my mamma, from myself and my much-prized partner, our best and warmest congratulations. . . . Let me *now* tell you, that although you were of the order of the rueful countenance on the 14th of October last, that day, I have no doubt, will turn out to have been a propitious one for us all."[2]

[1] Mr. Scott must have contemplated a Tale in connexion with this subject, and afterwards abandoned the idea. In a letter to Daniel Terry, dated 8th February 1818, he says, "a beautiful Drama might be made of the concealment of the Scotch regalia during the troubles." —See Life, vol. iv. p. 125.

[2] Alas for human foresight! My sister's short but happy union with Mr. Cadell was terminated by her death on the 16th July, then at hand.

CHAPTER V.

John Ballantyne, inconvenient Renewal of Bills—New Travels on the Continent projected and contracted for—Death and Bequest of Mr. Carpenter —Burt's Letters from the North of Scotland—Collected Poems—Sale of Copyrights—Physical Conundrums—Jealous interest in James Ballantyne and Co.—Third Series of Tales of My Landlord, The Bride of Lammermoor and The Legend of Montrose—Ivanhoe and The Monastery in progress.

NOTWITHSTANDING the friendly relations apparently existing at this time between Mr. Scott and Constable and Co., doubts seem to have arisen as to the commercial destination of the work that was to follow the Second Series of Tales of My Landlord. The conduct of John Ballantyne does appear, on some occasions, to have been rather tortuous, and on all occasions more exacting in the matter of pecuniary accommodation than was either convenient or agreeable to that firm. On June 12, 1818, my father writes to Mr. Cadell, then in London:—"We have a strong argument in our heavy concern in the Register 1814, 1815, and our taking J. B.'s books, but both John and James Ballantyne have shown an evident desire to quarrel with us for several months past. John's mode of doing business with us is quite abominable: every bill they want renewed—granted for their own accommoda-

tion,—he must see his agreements, etc.; in short, we are treated in an unbusinesslike and most unbecoming way. . . . I will do all that propriety and prudence dictate to avoid any open rupture with them, but I fear it is at no great distance. . . . We are under no less than £7000 for them, which must be reduced. I don't believe that Mr. Scott is aware of the full extent of it, but if the Tales were finished, he shall be informed, and actually requested to pay all off. Our regular and legitimate dealings are quite enough."

The Heart of Midlothian was published in June 1818, and received with the usual meed of approbation. On the 15th my father wrote as follows:—"I had a long conversation with John B. on Saturday. There is no bargain with any one as yet about new Tales, but there have been attempts from Princes Street. John says that the author does not want money just yet, but may soon, when bills will do, but that both he and 'James, poor fellow,' as he observed, must have *slices*. He mentioned having heard from Longman and Co., but said that he had not answered their letter yet. . . . You will find an application immediately after the present volumes are ready, that we give the B.'s one-fourth each, we advancing all the needful, or some such proposition. I could wish that an arrangement, if it did not involve engagements, could be made before John Murray comes down, as I dread some tampering with him."

Whatever attempts may have been made to detach Scott about this time from my father's firm had proved unsuccessful; but both partners must have had their

apprehensions, for I find Mr. Cadell, on the 16th August, writing as follows :—" Murray will visit Mr. Scott, and I am anxious for your return, that some communication be made *soon* about the small edition of the Novels. I have an idea in my head that may do some good—to make our calculations of cost with all deliberation, and consider what we should say; and as I have the intention of so soon passing his door, I could be referred to as having the documents, and would talk to him on the subject. I could come from Crailing and spend a day or two with him, and speak not only of this, but of the Register. I would also ask about his promised article for the Magazine. I would not be mealy-mouthed—we must be so no longer. Others drop this and get on with astonishing success: we must go and do likewise."

In accordance with the above suggestion, Mr. Cadell visited Abbotsford, and wrote as follows to my father, on the 6th September, on his return to Crailing House :— " The morning after I received yours I set out for Abbotsford, which I reached about eleven o'clock in the forenoon. I found the lion in his den, very busy; he however laid his pen aside, and walked round the whole of his property with me; we were on foot nearly five hours. We had a long crack, both then and afterwards, on various, indeed I may almost say every, subject, all which I shall tell you about when I return. He said he had written to you about some more money, and in the meantime wishes the three £500 bills to stand at his debit. He is to be in town on Tuesday or Wednesday, when you may look for a call. He is in great spirits, and I do think we stand very

well with him, and bid fair to retain the place we hold. He is working hard, and says he shall publish in November. He takes a solemn leave of the public, and then turns his mind to the Letters on the History of Scotland; as he does not intend to go to Italy in the summer of 1819, but in the following winter—the summer season in that country is unhealthy. In fact, we had a crack for many hours. I asked him point-blank for his promised article on Dreams for the Magazine; he has that in the country however. I also [asked] him about a Tale. He thought it a good idea, and after what he has in hand, might be managed. When I return, I shall mention to you various circumstances to show how necessary it is to exert with our Magazine—to get leading and smart articles on General Criticism, etc. It is clear that he is spoken to much about the other. He has not got the last Number of ours, which is a pity, as I spoke of the Review by Mr. Wright, which he had not seen."

Later, on the 9th November, Mr. Cadell writes:—"With this you have copy of John Ballantyne's communication, which, on the whole, I cannot but look upon as most advantageous. It is unconnected with bad books, and is got for the bare advance of a portion of the profits; in fact, for such a work, and from such an author, the terms are most favourable, . . . and if health or the Court prevent his going, we must just get John to procure a novel or something else in its place; what we get is little enough to whitewash the E. A. Register. What with the Continental Letters, the new Tales, and the History of Scotland, we have a prodigious stake in the great man;

but our insurances[1] enable us to go further than any others dare to do, and I have little doubt we will in due time get all matters made smooth; if he lives there is no fear. . . . We may, without being too sanguine, calculate on £8000 to £10,000 of profit on works already contracted for! If any incident prevents his going to the Continent, I sincerely hope he may get on with the History of Scotland; and after that, if he does not travel, write a novel to repay the siller which will have gone into the 'jaw-hole,' and be only redeemable in that way."

Mr. Scott being soon afterwards again in serious pecuniary difficulties, Mr. Cadell went to him directly, and told him of a quarter where, on his own security, and that of Constable and Co., he might obtain the use of £2000, and added that he came to state this thus directly, in case Sir Walter might not wish the matter to go further. "He mentioned that it would aid him much, and that he would wipe it out by something good in our own way. I saw something brewing that I cannot well explain in writing, and that we shall have immediately some negotiation through John Ballantyne. . . . I know you will say we are going too far. I am aware that the remark is not ill-founded, but to his own name we are under no risk of loss. The day on which I called about the Tales, I clearly saw that something was annoying him. Indeed, he confessed that his mind, if this measure *did*, would be greatly relieved prior to his going to the Continent."

[1] Messrs. Constable and Co. had, for their own security, recently effected an insurance on the life of Mr. Scott.

It is stated[1] that in the close of 1818 Scott had formed a project of joining the Duke of Buccleuch and Captain Adam Ferguson in an extensive Continental tour, and on the 15th January 1819 Scott himself writes to the latter: —"I am not sure at all whether I shall not come to Lisbon and surprise you, instead of going to Italy by Switzerland; that is, providing the state of Spain will allow me, without any unreasonable danger of my throat, to get from Lisbon to Madrid, and thence to Gibraltar. I am determined to roll a little about, for I have lost much of my usual views of summer pleasure here."[2] Mr. Lockhart makes no mention of any projected literary work in connexion with this unrealized excursion, but the following correspondence of November 1818 shows that an important contract had been concluded on the strength of the mere intention :—

MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, *7th Nov.* 1818.

"I trust I have to communicate to you the most satisfactory intelligence. On a visit here I have succeeded in securing by a regular offer and acceptance, of which you have copies annexed, the 'New Travels on the Continent,' respecting which the author thinks as little as needful may be said, but this of course is left to your own discretion. I propose (as at our communing) to have a third, and your house two-third shares; all subordinate matters arising can be settled hereafter. This work must have great success—for we certainly know little of the present

[1] See Life, vol. iv. p. 22. [2] See Life, vol. iv. p. 223.

state of the Continent—from such high authority, both political and literary.

"To leave room for the copies I must conclude my letter, and I trust to hear from you in course. I am now hurrying home to raise my £1000, the £2000 arising payable from your shares you will no doubt accept for. Of course I shall make no objection to your parting with any share of this copyright in London, or think of interfering with your arrangements for its sale; considering you the husband of the book,—I am always, dear Sir, J. B."

MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE to MR. SCOTT.

"ABBOTSFORD, *7th November* 1818.

"SIR,—Acting upon instructions received from Mr. Constable previous to his departure for London, I hereby make offer to you, in his name and my own, for an edition or editions, amounting in all to Ten Thousand Copies, of a work in three volumes octavo, being a continuation of Paul's Letters, and to contain your own farther travels on the Continent next season, a deposit of Three Thousand Pounds sterling to be raised in the course of the present month; and, eventually, to pay to your order (as usual) the full half-profits of the above work, payable on publication, without any deduction of charge for advertising or other expense beyond paper and print: the above Three Thousand Pounds to go to your debit in the division of profits on the first edition of the work.—I am, Sir, for Mr. Constable and self, your most obedient servant," JOHN BALLANTYNE."

MR. SCOTT to MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE.

"SIR,—I accept of the above terms; it being, however, understood that in case either from health or the necessity of attending the Court of Session, or any other circumstance of intervening difficulty, I find myself unable to fulfil my purpose of going upon the Continent, I shall be at liberty from the engagement, being in that case obliged to take up the bills issued for raising the deposit of three thousand pounds sterling.—I remain your obedient servt., WALTER SCOTT."

MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE to MR. CONSTABLE.

"I feel satisfied that it is unlikely you will disapprove of my part of this bargain, and that it is the one you would have made yourself if on the spot; should I be mistaken, however, and have 'outrun the Constable' in my zeal for so desirable an object, I shall surely expect to hear from you in course; the third I have reserved, being all I can well undertake for on my own account. J. B."

MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE to MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND CO.

"EDINBURGH, 10*th November* 1818.

"GENTLEMEN,—Having acted for you and self in the annexed described transaction with Walter Scott, Esq., I hereby state that I did so under the consideration that your house was to have two-thirds of the work and myself one-third, which I trust will be satisfactory. In this case you will please to append your acceptance and agreement hereto.—I am, Gentlemen, your most obed. servt.,

"JOHN BALLANTYNE.

"The credit will be as usual,—six and twelve months after publication."

"*Edinburgh, 11th November* 1818.—We hereby accept of the offer made in the foregoing letter.

"ARCHD. CONSTABLE AND Co."

"In conformity to the foregoing arrangements, I have received, this 11th November, the acceptance of Messrs. Constable and Co. to four bills of £500 each, at 6, 8, 10, and 12 months, to be carried on till the terms of payment as specified by the author, or leaving a claim of interest for unexpired time, to be payable to Messrs. Constable and Co. should they take up the bills earlier.

"JOHN BALLANTYNE, *Agent for the Author.*"

MR. JOHN BALLANTYNE *to* MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND Co.

"EDINBURGH, *10th November 1818.*

"GENTLEMEN,—I hereby offer you the whole books attaching to my one-third share of 10,000 copies of the work before described, at 10 per cent. below sale price, to be paid by bills at 10, 12, and 15 months from publication.—I am, Gentlemen, your obedt. servt.,

"JOHN BALLANTYNE."

"We accept of the above.—ARCHD. CONSTABLE AND Co.

"*Edinburgh, 11th November* 1818."

My father was in London while this arrangement was being made, but it appeared to his partner so clearly for the advantage of their house, that Mr. Cadell did not hesitate to conclude it on his own responsibility, and announced the fact as follows:—

"EDINBURGH, *Sunday, 8th Nov.* 1818.

"MY DEAR SIR,—This morning's post has brought to hand a long letter from John Do, at Abbotsford, who has *agreed* with Mr. Scott for his *Continental Travels,* in 3 vols. octavo, himself (John) to have one-third, and *us* two-thirds, the number 10,000, and the division half-profits. To say the least of it, the bargain is not a bad one by any means; and this is clear, whatever share John has in these matters, he certainly has the merit of getting them arranged. I shall not have time to send you a copy of his letter and agreement to-day, but, as there will be a coach-parcel to-morrow, I shall not fail to possess you of it. The only prominent part to be acted *just now* is, that £3000 must be forthcoming this month—£2000 of it by us. I have no doubt John counts on our doing both parts, which, upon the whole, I do not see how we can object to; but when he comes to ask it, I shall make a point of securing his share, that we may have a command of the book. I cannot, from want of time, enter into the particulars of the bargain, but Mr. Scott binds himself, in case of bad health, or the business of the Court, to take up the bills to be granted on account of this book. I shall accept of the bargain without any delay, and try to grant the bills, if possible, to Mr. Scott himself. He does not wish it mentioned for the present. John Do's communication is, upon the whole, fair, and the good of the arrangement is, that it is quite unfettered with anything but a division of profits.

"As, in all likelihood, John will be at me before I can hear from you, I shall close the matter as smoothly as I can."

In a letter from Mr. Cadell to my father, of December 3d, I find the following passage with reference to the bequest of Mr. Carpenter to the family of Mr. Scott:—"I had yesterday a call from Mr. Scott in great glee. He said the succession to his family will be between forty and fifty thousand pounds. I hear, however, that there is £15,000 of it doubtful. He says he will write no less from this great windfall. The Duke of Buccleuch is just setting off for the Continent with Captain Ferguson. Mr. Scott expects to meet him in Rome during the spring or summer. He is in great feather,—asked about you, and requested me to mention to you this his said good fortune."

Owing to some "circumstance of intervening difficulty" Mr. Scott found it necessary to abandon the idea of this projected tour. The following letter, referring to an edition of Burt's Letters from the North of Scotland, which had been advertised in London with his name upon the title-page, was written from Edinburgh to my father, then in London, on the 18th December 1818:—

"DEAR SIR,—I have two or three things to write to you about, and have only waited till I was settled in Edinburgh; and now there is added unto these a trifling vexation, in which I will beg the favour of you to act as my friend and agent.

"Some time ago Messrs. Gale and Fenner applied to me to publish a new edition of Burt's Letters from the North of Scotland, which I declined, but referred them to Mr. Robert Jamieson as a person every way fitted to do so; and wishing at once to befriend him and to do an agree-

able thing to a respectable house, I promised to give him access to such information as should happen to be in my power. Accordingly I put into Mr. Jamieson's hands two or three volumes of manuscript collections respecting the Highlands, from which I suppose he received some information. He did not ask me to write, nor did I happen to write, a single line of original composition. Now, in return for this gratuitous civility on my part, without speaking one word to me on the subject, and after Mr. Jamieson had written to them to say that such a thing would be highly disagreeable to me, these gentlemen have clapt my name upon the title-page of a book of which I never read a page or wrote a line. I must beg you to take the disagreeable task of informing them that I consider myself as very unhandsomely treated, and insist upon the title being cancelled. It is a trick equally unworthy of gentlemen or honest tradesmen, and they shall not find that it will turn to their advantage, as I will certainly either apply for an injunction or otherwise expose their conduct. I think I am not apt to be irritable on matters of little consequence, but considering that I was doing what I could to serve them, this usage is truly provoking. I could have had little objection to their saying by way of advertisement that I had given Mr. Jamieson some of his materials, and he will very naturally have said so in his Preface; but it is too impudent to put any one's name into a title-page without his consent.

"I am much disposed to enter into your views about the poems. It is unlikely that I will ever again compose a poem of any considerable length, and upon col-

lecting the whole and giving them a new shape, I am much disposed to add to the collection the Vision (*sic*) of Triermain and Harold the Dauntless, and to revise and correct the whole kitt of these rhyming affairs by way of good-bye to them.

"I will be greatly obliged to you to look out and bring down with you the last volume of the State Trials, vol. xxii. as I think—it contains the trials for treason in 1794, etc., and is wanting to complete the set you furnished me with.

"My time has been much occupied in the country, but I am now seriously engaged in literary labour. Other matters you will have heard of by Cadell and Jo. Ballantyne, particularly of my intention to go abroad in spring or summer. Abbotsford is getting on, and will be altogether habitable by Christmas. We had a grand gala of the Forest troop of yeomanry in the Muckle room, and were very merry—it was really a grand show of the kind, and the whole dinner was provided from the farm.—Believe me, dear Sir, very truly yours, WALTER SCOTT.

"Remember me to our friends in the Row. I think all the right in these poems lies betwixt you and them and myself, excepting a share of Marmion, which Jo. Murray has. If your plan goes forward you had better let me communicate on the subject with Mr. Murray, in case of any old acidity creeping into the mess."

In the month of January 1819 an arrangement was made by which all the copyrights of Scott's works then existing, with the exception of a fourth share of Marmion,

which was the property of Mr. Murray,[1] were transferred to Messrs. Constable and Co., at the price of £12,000. This transaction included—

"The said Walter Scott, Esq.'s, present share, being the entire copyright, of	.	Waverley.
Do.	do. . .	Guy Mannering.
Do.	do. . .	Antiquary.
Do.	do. . .	Rob Roy.
Do.	do. . .	Tales of My Landlord, 1st Series.
Do.	do. . .	do. 2d Series.
Do.	do. . .	do. 3d Series.
Do.	do. . .	Bridal of Triermain.
Do.	do. . .	Harold the Dauntless.
Do.	do. . .	Sir Tristrem.
Do.	do. . .	Roderick Collection.
Do.	do. . .	Paul's Letters.
Do.	being one-eighth of	The Lay of the Last Minstrel.
Do.	being one-half of	The Lady of the Lake.
Do.	being one-half of	Rokeby.
Do.	being one-half of	The Lord of the Isles."

Mr. Lockhart says with reference to it:—"I may observe, that had these booksellers fulfilled their part of this agreement, by paying off, prior to their insolvency in 1826, the whole bonds for £12,000, which they signed on

[1] Mr. Murray, as will appear from the following letter, long resisted all attempts to induce him to part with his share in this copyright, but when at last he yielded, did so in a manner highly complimentary to Sir Walter:—

"To Sir Walter Scott, Bart., Edinburgh.

"ALBEMARLE STREET, *June* 8, 1829.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Mr. Lockhart has this moment communicated your letter respecting my fourth share of the copyright of Marmion. I have already been applied to by Messrs. Constable and by Messrs. Longman, to know what sum I would sell this share for;—but so highly do I estimate the honour of being, even in so small a degree, the pub-

the 2d of February 1819, no interest in the copyrights above specified could have been expected to revert to the "Author of Waverley;"[1] and he is, no doubt, correct in saying so; but, on the other hand, it is probable that had not the large necessities of the Author of Waverley occasioned his drawing without limit on the credit of Archibald Constable and Co., these bonds would have been in due course paid off, and the creditors of their house, as well as Sir Walter Scott himself, would have benefited *pro tanto* by his diminished responsibility for double sets of bills.

In the month of February Scott suffered severely from a return of the attacks of cramp in the stomach, and writes from Abbotsford to my father on 23d March as follows:—

"DEAR CONSTABLE,—You will probably hear rumours of my backslidings, which may be greatly exaggerated. I have had, since Ballantyne and Ross were here, two relapses into my *conundrums*, both very severe, and last-

lisher of the author of the poem, that no pecuniary consideration whatever can induce me to part with it.

"But there is a consideration of another kind, which, until now, I was not aware of, which would make it painful to me if I were to retain it a moment longer. I mean the knowledge of its being required by the author, into whose hands it was spontaneously resigned in the same instant that I read his request.

"This share has been profitable to me fifty-fold beyond what either publisher or author could have anticipated, and, therefore, my returning it on such an occasion you will, I trust, do me the favour to consider in no other light than as a mere act of grateful acknowledgment for benefits already received by, my dear Sir, your obliged and faithful servant, JOHN MURRAY."

[1] See Life, vol. iv. p. 221.

ing several hours. Yet, strange to tell, I think I am better to-day, upon the whole, than I was while they were here. Last night was a cruelly painful trial, the spasms lasting from half-past six till half-past four in the morning, without a moment's intermission. Yet after all this agony, and much bleeding and blistering, and dosing with laudanum, here I am sitting quietly in my own room, in hopes two days will restore me the use of my arms—sorely mangled with lancets, and the free exercise of my faculties. On looking through a copy of the Lay (terribly imperfect, by the way) I see nothing to add or correct, so you may send it to press when you choose. We think we understand this disorder now, and though we may be long of conquering it, yet with the help of my excellent constitution, I have every hope of maintaining a successful war and being victor at last. Imagine that while I had screamed and yelled for eight hours through very agony, my pulse never rose above the usual temperature of health. I have written to Baillie, whose prescriptions were so successful two years since, and hope to hear from him. If the worst come to the worst, I am putting my things into such order that you, my good friend, may not have inconvenient loss added to the necessary close of a very long and most friendly correspondence. But, notwithstanding this little hint, I assure you I intend, like Sir Anthony Absolute, to live a long while, and pigeon you of a great deal more cash; and I trust, within ten days, to be well enough to receive David and you at this place, agreeably to your promise.

"I beg to put you in mind of the last volume of my

State Trials; also of the Scots Magazine and the Swift, of which I have no copy. If you have any entertaining book to send me it will be charity.—I am, dear Constable, yours truly, WALTER SCOTT.

"As I cannot write two letters, please let Jas. B. know how I stand."

The care with which Scott watched over the interest of James Ballantyne and Company is evinced by the following letter to my father, in reply to his announcement of an ornamented edition of *The Tales* having been committed to another printing-house :—

"ABBOTSFORD, 26*th April* [1819].

"MY DEAR SIR,—I omit other parts of your letter at this busy moment to notice one which gives me some surprise. You tell me you have engaged with Messrs. Ramsay to execute an *ornamented edition of the Tales,* and I do not find that you have previously asked Mr. Ballantyne whether he could undertake it within your time, and I am sure you have not mentioned it to *me.* I think, from what I know of the office, that he *can* undertake, under a penalty if you will, to produce the book within your period. There are *sixteen* presses, of which only *twelve* are at present employed; and rather than these Tales go anywhere else, I say to you as the man said to the queen of France: 'What is possible *shall* be done, what is impossible *must* be done.' I need not recall to Messrs. Constable and Cadell what passed betwixt us in their shop, and that there was an engagement, as solemn as a pledge of honour could make it, that the works with which I

then parted should be printed as usual in Saint John Street. I should otherwise have given my own knife to cut my own throat, and I hope my right to insist on this will not be held more precarious because it was trusted to their honour as gentlemen, and not put into writing.

"I therefore hope this arrangement, too hastily adopted, will be set aside, unless Mr. Ballantyne, on being possessed of the circumstances, shall allow his inability to undertake the work; otherwise I cannot consider faith as kept with me—an impression which is likely to have its consequences on your interest, as the present step would have on mine. I am very willing to hope that the arrangement was made under some impression occasioned by haste. But I venture to presage that if an edition of these Tales is printed in the way you propose, your loss will be greater than mine.—I am, dear Sir, your faithful, humble servant, WALTER SCOTT.

"I am always sorry to write cross letters, but this is a very serious matter with me. I am getting my health again perfectly, and there is some work in me yet (as they say of an old horse). I hope you do not think otherwise."

The edition was undertaken by Messrs. Ballantyne and Company, and Mr. Scott's good humour at once restored.

MR. SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, 30*th April* [1819].

"DEAR SIR,—Your letter is perfectly satisfactory. The subject being a matter of some moment with me, I am very glad it is so settled. You will observe that the quantity of the work in the Canongate arises entirely, or

nearly so, from my own labours, and so should in no case tell against me.

"Your plan of the bills in the letter of 28th is quite agreeable to me. My health continues firm and well, notwithstanding a good deal of fatigue, owing to some bustle in the neighbourhood. I will write you about the works on Sunday. In general, I think your plan excellent.—Yours truly, WALTER SCOTT."

The Third Series of Tales of My Landlord appeared on 10th June 1819. It included the Bride of Lammermoor and the Legend of Montrose, and was received with acclamation by the public. Mr. Scott had been confined to bed on the day of publication; so ill, indeed, that he himself despaired of recovery. The crisis passed, however, and so rapid was his convalescence that on 4th July we find him again at Abbotsford, dictating to John Ballantyne.

MR. BALLANTYNE to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, *2d July* 1819.

"DEAR SIR,—I have the greatest pleasure in informing you that I have found Mr. Scott to all appearance perfectly well, and not even weak. He takes the utmost care of himself. I can scarcely snatch a moment to give you this welcome information, as I am writing to his dictation from morning to night, and he proposes I shall do so till Monday morning. It is no pleasant job stooping over a breast with a blistering-plaster upon it (which is my case), to write all-day; but all our interests are too deeply concerned to admit of my hesitating.

"He was very well satisfied with the £105[1] and the shape in which it reached him. He thinks it ample payment; expected about £70 or £80, and declares he would not have received a larger sum than that sent if you had been liberal enough even to have offered it. God's sake push forward the paper, as copy will come in large packets presently. Mr. S. would like to see the type and page adopted.

"Best respects to Co.—Yours ever, my dear Sir, very sincerely, JOHN BALLANTYNE."

MR. SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"*Sunday evening,*
"ABBOTSFORD, *4th July* 1819.

"DEAR CONSTABLE,—I heartily wish you joy of the success of Jedediah. I think I can promise his successor will be as popular. I am, thank God, able to work, and pleased with my labour. I have written to Mr. James Ballantyne, whom please to inform when you see him that I wish the present work to be communicated to no person whatsoever out of the office. I wish the world to have an opportunity to debate whether it be by the same author or not.[2]

"Walter's commission, outfit, etc., will oblige us to renew some of the bills payable in the beginning of August and end of this month. I propose to send the greater part to London with Jo. B., by which means they can be cashed easily without going to our banks, and he will remit you the proceeds ten days or a fortnight before

[1] For Article "Drama" in Supplement to Encyclopædia Britannica.
[2] Ivanhoe, a Romance.

the current bills fall due. These engagements are now much restricted, and only exist from my extensive purchases of land.

"I hope you will come out here one day and bring your son with you. You will find me much better. Only I cannot stoop to write long. Many thanks to Mr. Napier for the *douceur* which came by John, and will serve to purchase shirts for my young soldier. It is more than the article is worth by at least one-fourth. I would write to Mr. Napier, but he will excuse it, as the operation is painful to me from the stooping posture. Please offer him my regards. I doubt I will be unable to undertake anything in the way of review or otherwise beyond my regular labour. If Mr. Jeffrey makes out his promised visit, however, we will see what can be done.

"Blackwood and Murray have given in, and accepted the terms which they declined before. The former had the assurance to say that his taking this full advantage was merely out of respect for the author. I have taken care it shall not stand on that footing. But it is as well the business is closed, though at some loss, which I dare say you will fall to pay one day, with some butter to send it down.

"Anything you want to know farther John will explain, as I have made him quite master of my views during his absence. I suppose the last series will immediately go to press again, which will be clear gain to you over paper and print. I am glad your returns have come home roundly at last, though so long delayed; but who can answer for bad health? I shall draw on you for a

full set of the Novels to be sent to John Clerk, who kindly and handsomely refused his fee when consulted. —Yours very truly, WALTER SCOTT."

On the 4th of November, six weeks before the publication of Ivanhoe, my father wrote from Edinburgh as follows to his partner, then in London :—" I much fear that the author will injure all if he brings out The Monastery early in the year—instead of which, on every account, he ought the moment Ivanhoe is finished to set to work on the History of Scotland. The wants of the author[1] would, I think, also be better supplied from this publication than from The Monastery, on which he has got so much already. . . . I shall see whether I could not venture to propose this plan—the main thing against which is, that John and James have no interest in it. Longman and Co. would be quieted by the appearance of the History, and I am certain their interest as well as ours would be greatly benefited thereby. The author has the History so much at his fingerends, that he could write it, if once fairly at work, without any kind of difficulty, and there would be no delay in the copying of MS. He wants funds for the present month, besides carrying forward every bill-accommodation,—this I have no doubt we shall see ere many days pass over us, but unless with a view to our own decided and certain interest, I will not move; indeed, any other proceeding would be insanity."

[1] On December 7th my father wrote as follows to Mr. Cadell :—" Mr. Scott must have not only the paper, £1800 accepted for, but also his profits in the 2000 additional copies [not yet printed]. This I have agreed to grant, rather than have a breeze."

CHAPTER VI.

The Rev. Sydney Smith, in the Farmer's Magazine, on Scotch Sheep, and Oxen for Ploughing, and his Critiques on The Bride of Lammermoor, Ivanhoe, and The Monastery—The Monastery published by Messrs. Longman—Sir Walter Scott—Swift—The Abbot—Kenilworth—The Influence of John Ballantyne—Sir Walter offers to edit a Novelist's Library for his benefit—Three Letters from John Ballantyne to A. Constable—His kindly nature, and his death.

OWING to the fragmentary and interrupted condition of the documents at my command, I know not what amount of correspondence there may have been between Mr. Sydney Smith and my father after the former abandoned all editorial connexion with the Edinburgh Review, but he was accustomed to acknowledge receipt of presentation copies of works which were sent to him, and, in the following letter from Foston, he kindly offers occasional contributions to the Farmer's Magazine. His proposal, as may be supposed, was gratefully accepted, and for the amusement of my readers I shall quote here the first-fruits, in a paper signed Z, on the inconvenience attending Scotch sheep, and the use of oxen in ploughing.[1]

[1] "To the Conductor of the Farmer's Magazine.

"SIR,—It has been my lot to have passed the greatest part of my life in cities. About six or seven years ago I was placed in the country, in a situation where I was under the necessity of becoming a farmer, and, amongst the many expensive blunders I have made, I warn those who may find themselves in similar situations against *Scotch sheep*, and *oxen for ploughing*.

"I had heard a great deal of the fine flavour of Scotch mutton, and

"DEAR SIR,—I wish, when you send me the Review, you would enclose with it your Farmer's Journal. I am a good deal engaged in farming, and will every now and then send you an article for my own amusement; and be so good as to send these publications in future to me, to be left at Pearson's, Red Lyon, Monk Barr, York.—Yours very truly, SYDNEY SMITH.

"*May* 19, 1819, FOSTON, YORK."

In acknowledgment of The Bride of Lammermoor, a

it was one of the great luxuries I promised myself in farming. A luxury it certainly is, but the price paid for it is such that I would rather give up the use of animal food altogether than obtain it by such a system of cares and anxieties. Ten times a day my men were called off from their work to hunt the Scotch sheep out of my own or my neighbours' wheat. They crawled through hedges where I should have thought a rabbit could hardly have found admission, and where crawling would not do they had recourse to leaping. Five or six times they all assembled in a body, and set out upon their return to the north. My bailiff took a place in the mail, pursued them, and overtook them half way to Newcastle. Then it was quite impossible to get them fat; they consumed my turnips in winter and my clover in the summer without any apparent addition to their weight. Ten or twelve per cent. always died of the rot, and more would have perished in the same manner if they had not been prematurely eaten out of the way. My ploughing oxen were an equal subject of vexation. They had a constant purging upon them which it was impossible to stop. They ate more than twice as much as the same number of horses. They did half as much work as the same number of horses. They could not bear hot weather, nor wet weather, nor go well down hill. It took five men to shoe an ox. They ran against my gate-posts, lay down in the court whenever they were tired, and ran away at the sight of a stranger. I have now got into a good breed of English sheep, and useful cart-horses, and am doing very well. I make this statement to guard young gentlemen-farmers against Brother Young and the pernicious nonsense of brother gentlemen, for whose advice I am at least poorer by £300 or £400.—Yours truly, Z."

copy of which my father had sent him, Mr. Smith writes as follows, and, as his criticisms are generally just, and always characteristic, I shall in future quote his letters to my father on similar occasions:—

"YORK, *June* 28, 1819.

"DEAR SIR,—I am truly obliged by your kindness in sending me the last novel of Walter Scott. It would be profanation to call him Mr. Walter Scott. I should as soon say Mr. Shakespeare or Mr. Fielding. Sir William and Lady Ashton are excellent, and highly dramatic. Drumthwacket is very well done; parts of Caleb are excellent. Some of the dialogues between Bucklaw and Craigengelt are as good as can be, and both these characters very well imagined. *As the author has left off writing*, I shall not again be disturbed so much in my ordinary occupations. When I get hold of one of these novels, turnips, sermons, and justice-business are all forgotten.—Your sincere well-wisher, SYDNEY SMITH."

On the 18th December in this year the romance of Ivanhoe made its appearance—a time of much distress in the family of the author, who on Christmas-day writes to my father: "You would hear with regret that the succession of family losses I have of late met with was yesterday augmented by the death of your old friend my excellent mother."

The sale of Ivanhoe in the early editions amounted to 12,000 copies.[1] Before its completion the prolific author

[1] "FOSTON, *December* 25, 1819.

"DEAR SIR,—I waited to thank you until I had read the novel (Ivanhoe). There is *no doubt* of its success. There is nothing very

had made considerable progress in the writing of his next Tale.

The Monastery was published by Messrs. Longman in the beginning of March 1820. Of the causes which led to this arrangement I have as yet no definite knowledge;[1] but on the 28th March Scott writes as follows :—

"To JAMES BALLANTYNE.

"'28*th March*, 96 PICCADILLY.

"'DEAR JAMES,—I am much obliged by your attentive letter. Unquestionably Longman and Co. sell their books at subscription price, because they have the first of the market, and only one-third of the books; so that, as they say with us, 'Let them care that come ahint.' This I knew and foresaw, and the ragings of the booksellers, considerably aggravated by the displeasure of Constable and his house, are ridiculous enough; and as to their injuring the work, if it have a principle of locomotion in it, they cannot stop it—if it has not, they cannot make it move. I care not a bent twopence about their quarrels;

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powerful and striking in it; but it is uniformly agreeable, lively and interesting, and the least dull and most easily read of any novel I remember. Pray make the author go on; I am sure he has five or six more such novels in him, therefore five or six holidays for the whole kingdom.—Truly yours, SYDNEY SMITH."

[1] I possess the original of the following letter written about this time by Mr. Scott to John Ballantyne :—

"*Tuesday night.*

"MY DEAR JOHN,—I have had a visit from Constable, and took the opportunity to say that the Mon. would be continued, sweetening it at the same time with notice of the T. of My Landlord. He was all alive to the last intimation, and talked of producing the *ready* whenever called upon—with a fortnight's notice only—so there is a plug fitted. I will consider your suggestion respecting Ivanhoe against Monday. But though the book is sold to the trade, yet by an unhappy accident a vessel containing 6000 copies was forced to put into Shields, and there is not even yet advice of her having reached London. Before treating for a new bargain, we must give full time to exhaust the old. —Yours truly, W. SCOTT."

only I say now, as I always said, that Constable's management is best, both for himself and the author; and had we not been controlled by the narrowness of discount, I would put nothing past him. I agree with the public in thinking the work not very interesting; but it was written with as much care as the others—that is, with no care at all;[1] and

'If it isna weel bobbit, we 'll bob it again.'

. . . . . .

"'My occasions here will require that John or you send me two notes payable at Coutts's for £300 each, at two and three months' date. I will write to Constable for one at £350, which will settle my affairs here, which, with fees and other matters, come, as you may think, pretty heavy. Let the bills be drawn payable at Coutts's, and sent without delay."[2]

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[1] Of this novel Sydney Smith wrote as follows to my father:—

"FOSTON, *March* 25, 1820.

"DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged by your present of The Monastery, which I have read, and which I must frankly confess I admire less than any of the others—much less. Such I think you will find the judgment of the public to be. The idea of painting ancient manners in a fictitious story and in well-known scenery is admirable, and the writer has admirable talents for it; but nothing is done without pains, and I doubt whether pains have been taken in The Monastery,—if they have, they have failed. It is quite childish to introduce supernatural agency; as much of the terrors and follies of superstition as you please, but no actual ghosts and hobgoblins. I recommend one novel every year, and more pains. So much money is worth getting; so much deserved fame is worth keeping. So much amusement we ought all to strive to continue for the public good. You will excuse my candour —you know I am your well-wisher. I was the first to praise Ivanhoe, as I shall to praise the next, if I can do so conscientiously.—Yours sincerely, SYDNEY SMITH.

"Hunt's trial is not over. He acquits himself with great talent. The general opinion is he will have a verdict in his favour.

"My Review was sent by a waggon parcel, and came a week after the others were given out. Pray take care of this in future."

[2] See Life, vol. iv. p. 368. The "occasions" here referred to arose out of the expenses connected with the Baronetcy conferred on Mr. Scott. His new dignity was gazetted on the 30th March 1820.

"96 PICCADILLY, *28th March* 1820.

"DEAR CONSTABLE,—As matters stand with me here at present I wish you would be so good as send me a renewal of your note for £380, due in the end of this month, for betwixt one expense and another I shall scarce be able to retire it with convenience, having a 'portion' to pay, and Lord knows what besides. On the contrary, I may even ask you for £400 or £500 fraternal assistance till midsummer. I write in a most infernal bustle, which makes my very brain turn round, for added to the pell-mell of old and new friends is the whole hurricane of the Middlesex election passing and repassing my window every hour. For the rest, if I had three heads, like Cerberus, I could eat three dinners with them every day, and am fairly in a way to be smothered with kindness. Both parties here rejoice at Hunt's conviction, one because he is convicted at all, the other because the verdict is special. All agree the judge is own sister to the unfortunate Miss Baillie of the song. I hope to be down in the end of April to witness that ceremony which cannot with good luck be performed in May.[1] Your reply to this will find me at this house, and may be sent under cover to Mr. Freeling.—Yours very truly, WALTER SCOTT.

"The note to be payable at Messrs. Coutts's in three months."

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"96 PICCADILLY, *5th April* 1820.

"DEAR SIR,—Yours with the enclosure came safe. Many thanks for your attention.

[1] The marriage of Miss Scott to Mr. John Gibson Lockhart.

"I find it impossible to get on with work here; perhaps it is as well not, for I am distracted by noise and visitors. I trust to set forward by the 20th or 21st, marry my damsel off, and take to the oar manfully.

"I have had a very odd communication from a Mr. Smith concerning Swift. A quantity of original letters and papers, formerly the property of Theophilus Swift, the Dean's grandnephew, were left in a lodging-house where he had died in miserable circumstances, and—wonderful judgment for some of the Dean's compositions—were found in the w.-c. Mr. Smith secured them, and is to put them into my hands for the new edition. As far as I can judge, they contain some novelty, and deserve to be carefully examined. Mr. Smith has begged a set of my works, which have the goodness to send him, addressed in charge to Mr. Joseph Hume, chymist, Long Acre, No. 108. Address, James Smith, Esquire, and put on the books, 'From the Author.'—Believe me very truly yours,

"WALTER SCOTT."

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"21*st April* 1820, PICCADILLY.

"DEAR CONSTABLE,—It will be most convenient to renew the £480, which therefore I have drawn a bill on you for. James Ballantyne will send it to you. I am much concerned about our joyous friend Johnnie, but his heart is so sound that I would fain hope he may yet live to enjoy the prosperous course of industry which his exertions have opened. It is a cruel case.[1]

[1] About this date I find the following from John Ballantyne to my father:—"Yesterday, in consequence of this rheumatism, I was obliged

"I heard the last day of that bloody dog Thistlewood's trial. Their plan, looking to its general results, was as foolish as it was bloodthirsty and horrible, but they had coaxed themselves into a firm belief that all the lower orders were possessed by the same demon which agitated themselves. Thistlewood declared every man a traitor who possessed above £10, and that the shopkeepers were all aristocrats, and ought to be devoted to plunder. Ings the butcher was to have the heads and plucks of Lords Castlereagh and Sidmouth for his fee, and he had his bags ready to carry them off in, and a large knife to amputate them.—Yours very truly, WALTER SCOTT."

The next novel of the series was The Abbot, which my father desired should be named *The Nunnery*. The following letter from Scott gives an excellent reason, had none other existed, for adhering to the actual title:—

"*7th March* 1820.

"DEAR SIR,—The only objection I know to your proposal (if it be an objection) is, that there is neither Nun nor Nunnery mentioned in the affair from beginning to end. I remember Harry Siddons wrote a novel, which he sold to Mr. Lane of the Minerva Press, who, not liking the title, new-christened it The Mysterious Bridal, or some such name. 'Saar,' as poor Harry used to say, 'there was

to forego a dinner from our friend Kinnear, and a good party; *to-day* I have a consultation of doctors on my case at three o'clock here, and I am *quite* ill with torture in my throat, chest, and back. I was thinking last night, if you and I were to pop off at this crisis, what a fine 'redd up' they would have to set about! But I rejoice that you are able to see your friends as usual."

neither mystery nor bridal in my poor book. So egad, Saar, the consequence was I took my own book out of a circulating library for some new reading to Mrs. Siddons, and never found it out till I was far in the first volume.' —Yours, etc., W. S."

Mr. Lockhart[1] gives a graphic picture of the relations of Scott and his commercial constituents:—

"For reasons, as we have seen, connected with the affairs of the Ballantynes, Messrs. Longman published the first edition of The Monastery; and similar circumstances induced Sir Walter to associate this house with that of Constable in the succeeding novel. Constable disliked its title, and would fain have had *The Nunnery* instead; but Scott stuck to his *Abbot*. The bookseller grumbled a little, but was soothed by the author's reception of his request that Queen Elizabeth might be brought into the field in his next romance, as a companion to the Mary Stuart of The Abbot. Scott would not indeed indulge him with the choice of the particular period of Elizabeth's reign indicated in the proposed title of *The Armada;* but expressed his willingness to take up his own old favourite legend of Mickle's ballad. He wished to call the novel, like the ballad, *Cumnor-Hall*, but in further deference to Constable's wishes, substituted 'Kenilworth.' John Ballantyne objected to this title, and told Constable the result would be 'something worthy of the kennel;' but Constable had all reason to be satisfied with the child of his christening. His partner, Mr. Cadell, says —'His vanity boiled over so much at this time, on having his suggestion gone into, that when in his high moods, he used to stalk up and down his room, and exclaim, "By G—, I am all but the author of the Waverley Novels!"' Constable's bibliographical knowledge, however, it is but fair to say, was really of most essential service to Scott upon many of these occasions; and his letter (now before me) proposing the subject of *The Armada*, furnished the Novelist with such a catalogue of materials for the illustration of the period as may, probably enough, have called forth some very energetic expression of thankfulness."

I must be permitted to doubt that the exclamation quoted above was ever uttered, yet we have the testimony

[1] See Life, vol. v. p. 27.

of Sir Walter Scott himself that but for the encouragement, and perhaps I may add, the suggestions of my father, the public might have had fewer of those novels which were the delight and glory of the age. In a letter to his publisher, dated March 23, 1822, which I shall quote hereafter, Sir Walter writes—"They talk of a farmer making two blades of grass grow where one grew before, but you, my good friend, have made a dozen volumes where probably but one would have existed;[1] and three months later, on June 14, I find my father writing to his partner—"Many sacrifices have been made to establish the trade of our house on its present important footing, and for the works of the Author of Waverley everything that booksellers could do has been done. I am sometimes half tempted to believe that of these books I am myself all but the author. You may accuse me of vanity if you please, but this I hold to be true." These words may perhaps have been the origin of the exaggerated utterance published by Mr. Lockhart.

With the solitary exception of the following extract from a letter to my father, dated "Trinity, 1820," I find no evidence of unpleasant feeling in John Ballantyne's correspondence; and I only make the quotation because it throws some light on Ballantyne's position as middleman between author and publisher:—

"It appears to me from your tone that you allow, unconsciously, an idea to occupy your mind that I am greatly obliged to you, personally, for the facility of payment and accommodation I have obtained from your house,

[1] See *infra*, p. 207.

in my capacity of agent for another. I cannot entertain such a feeling; well knowing that the eminent individual for whom I act would (failing me) take his own plans to accomplish with equal ease the same object. In the present—my own matter—I have lost, by delay, the profit on half my account, and suffered inconvenience by the detention of the other. These are no causes for gratitude.[1]

"As you place me, in terms, at the staves' end, it may be a proper opportunity to remind you that no bargain has been made betwixt us for the *books* attaching to my share of the work to succeed Kenilworth, and that I am therefore engaged by no tie, save interest and convenience, to sell them to your house. The author's bargain I have fulfilled to the letter, under his instructions. It is his, and not mine; and no branch of it has the remotest reference to an obligation on me to offer your house the books arising to me therefrom.—I am, dear Sir, yours respectfully, JOHN BALLANTYNE.

"*P.S.*—I beg to decline correspondence or conversation on business for the present. Dr. Kennedy visits me tomorrow morning, and puts me on a new and severe course of medicine, to which perfect disengagement and ease of mind are essentially necessary."

John Ballantyne had so much influence with Scott that his goodwill was felt to be most important. Mr. Cadell writes—"I would rather have John for a friend than for a rival;" "It is in some respects our interest to have the Ballantynes our partners, for everything they have a share

[1] See *ante*, p. 65.

in *comes out;*" and on November 3, 1820, writes of John as follows to my father:—"This person got a lift from Longman and Co. within these few days, *and will get whatever he ask*—I can assure you of that. I read what you said to Robinson to-day. He replied, 'Just tell Mr. Constable that *I must grant all he asks with good* names, or No. 39 will do it, and I want to keep John if I can.'"

Occasionally, however, John's demands were felt to be exorbitant, and on the 13th November I find the following passage in a letter from Mr. Cadell:—"Nothing but good policy can induce us to give him often what he asks; but *gold* may be purchased *above its value*, and so may John. I am decided in saying you have done quite right in the case of *Gowrie;*[1] it is very impudent in him to ask it, and it would certainly not have been prudent to have granted his request. Kenilworth would have been different; there the book is going on, and has every chance of being finished; as to this new one, John's offer of credit is not worth a thought. The book will not be out in March; if out in June it will be quite sufficient. As to the books of Kenilworth (John's share), you will soon be assailed for them in all probability, and if he does not try another quarter also with Gowrie in another shape, here (No. 90) you may rest assured he has little or no chance. Robinson thinks they will do what John asks at No. 39,—*he* will not."

On the 20th November Mr. Cadell adds:—"A proposal has come from John to Hurst, Robinson, and Co., and has got a total rejection. He made the cost £606,

[1] Embryo of The Fortunes of Nigel.

selling price 28s., offer 14s. per book, six and nine months' credit. I have a notion John will look not a little blue at H., R., and Co.'s letter."

It was in the autumn of 1820 that Sir Walter volunteered his services as editor of a Novelist's Library, for the sole benefit of John Ballantyne, an offer "eagerly embraced," Mr. Lockhart tells us, by the beneficiary, who lost no time in putting his patron in possession of the materials necessary for the work. The first volume of this series was published in February 1821; Kenilworth had appeared in the second week of January, and John Ballantyne writes to my father from Kirklands on the 31st of the same month:—

"DEAR SIR,—I have yours with much satisfaction. I sent you a small salmon, which I trust you received; and I have a fox's head and brush ready for you by first conveyance.

"I hope the new—Kenilworth, will not interfere with the finish of Ivanhoe, which it would suit me well to value for just now, small as the sum is. I'll *garr* the Novelist do, although the Row should burst in vituperation against it. Fleas are not lobsters.

"My wife is always gratified by your remembrance, and returns best compliments. We are just two miles from Melrose, and the turnpike passes the gate. I have good Gruyère and Stilton cheese; Claret, Vin de Grave, and Madeira for particular friends; whisky, ale, and rum for others; also two spare beds—one an especial good one.—Yours always respectfully,

"JOHN BALLANTYNE."

A few weeks later he wrote to my father:—

"*Tuesday morning.*

"DEAR SIR,—I have read Hogg with much amusement, and have not the least doubt you used every word put down for you. In fact, it is your frequent phraseology, and was exactly the style in which you *ought* to have spoken to Hogg on the subjects he quotes.

"To use one of your own phrases, If you *behave yourself* to-day, I shall make you a present of the original MS. of Rokeby, which I have carefully bound up in russia. There is *one* private letter bound in it, however, which I ought to extract.

"I positively go home to-morrow. I was so indifferent last night, that the upper region of my stomach swelled *externally*, with the distress of coughing and expectoration. I must leave Mr. Cadell's at seven this evening. I will kill myself in no cause, nor for no man. I dare not come out this forenoon.—Yours always respectfully,

"JOHN BALLANTYNE."

On the 25th of March he writes to Mr. Cadell:—"I am deeply grieved to hear that Mr. Constable continues unwell. Tell him to take care; he has often said to me, in joke, 'You could not do without me,' but I tell him, in earnest, 'We *can* NOT do without him.'"

The last letter I possess in John Ballantyne's handwriting is dated Kelso, 11th April 1821. It is as follows:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have the greatest pleasure in once more seeing your hand, although it is only expressed in

your signature; but you know I was always fond of your signature, even when it came in the shape of an acceptance to a good large bill for value received.

"Dr. Neale's bill has been long in a state of compensation, as Mr. Cadell holds a returned bill negotiated by him for me to a somewhat similar, though lesser, amount, of which I have regularly made a point of refusing the payment; and you are aware that Packwood's razors are but blunt weapons compared to the sharpness of Mr. Cadell's wits and mine in matters of business.

"As to the compensation you propose, of standing Sir Pandarus of Troy to my keeping Titian's Venus, I have only to say that I am at present under the dominion of another Deity. Besides, my dear Sir, the picture is as much Johnny Heegh the hangman's as Titian's. Titian! good lack! The picture has long been an eyesore to us, and I have a regular account for charge of warehouse-rent against you for it.

"The Rokeby I shall immediately on return home have a box made for, pack, and send. You have now only The Lady of the Lake to get to possess ALL that exist; but she shall be more profitable to me than your Venus would be.—I am always, my dear Sir, your obliged and respectful, J. BALLANTYNE."

The natural disposition of John Ballantyne was undoubtedly most kind and liberal. His faults were not of the heart, and Mr. James Stillie, who was for many years in his employment, assures me that a kinder or more considerate master never lived. He died on 16th June

1821. Sir Walter Scott's grief at the death of this favourite and friend was deep and sincere, and I believe he expressed the true sentiment of his heart when, beside the late-closed grave, he whispered in the ear of his unresponsive companion, "I feel as if there would be less sunshine for me from this day forth."

CHAPTER VII.

Kenilworth—Sydney Smith's Critique—Mr. Constable removes to England on account of his health—Writes from Clapham to Sir Walter about Waverley Novels—Early Letter from Lockhart to Mr. Constable, proposing a Novel—Lockhart's various descriptions of Mr. Constable—Letter from my father to Mr. Lockhart, with the Reply—Letter from Sir Walter Scott—Strictures by Mr. Lockhart in "the Life"—Quotation from a Letter of Mrs. John Ballantyne—Letter from my father to Sir Walter Scott—Quotation from "the Life"—The Pirate—Unfavourable Critical Estimate by Sydney Smith.

BEFORE Kenilworth was decided on as the subject of the novel to follow The Abbot, it would appear that my father had suggested one from a later period of our history, for, on the 25th July 1820, Scott writes from Abbotsford:—"There is one great objection to the time of Charles I., and that is, that the Puritans would be nothing without the Scripture language; and though I despise the cant and hypocrisy of those who state this as a matter of heinous offence, yet I would not wish to offend any good soul who had a real scruple on this head. Besides, the wit has been shorn and so much imitated, though in a poor way, that I have doubts if it has now novelty sufficient to render it racy—we will think of all this." On the 10th September he writes again from Abbotsford:—

"I will be happy to see you on the 15th, and beg you

will bring Mr. David Constable with you. I have not seen him this long time. I will go over Dryden's Life, but I cannot expect so curious a haul of new materials as I got for Swift; however, something may be done. I am very glad that this work, which cost me so much labour, is going to press again. I have lent James Ballantyne the early editions of the Plays to read by.

"There was a book published some years ago, called, I think, *Clavis Calendaria*, being an account of the Calendar, and the usages and customs on particular Saints' days and holidays. I should wish much to have it. The Progresses are doing me yeoman's service, for I am in *progress* myself. I have a question to ask you, which pray answer as soon as you can. What was the name of Dudley Earl of Leicester's first wife, whom he was supposed to have murdered at Cumnor Hall in Berkshire? I know it occurs in the Sidney Papers, and probably in the common genealogies, but I have no book here which contains the information. In Lysons' *Magna Britannia*, or some such name, there is something about this same Cumnor Hall. I wish you would have it copied out for me, and should like indeed to know anything that occurs to you about the village of Cumnor, its situation, etc. I like to be as minutely local as I can.

"Please not to say a word about Kenilworth. The very name explains so much, that some knowing fellow might anticipate the subject."

Kenilworth, as has already been stated, was published in January 1821, and was one of the most successful of the novels at the time of publication.

Sydney Smith writes of it as follows:—

"FOSTON, YORK, *Jan.* 26, 1821.

"Very good indeed; there cannot and will not be two opinions upon it. The dialogues are a little too long. Pray let us have no more Dominie Sampsons—good, but stale. These are trifling faults, but the author has completely recovered himself, and the novel is excellent.—Yours very truly, SYDNEY SMITH.

"Flibbertigibbet is very good and very new."

In the spring of 1821 my father fell into bad health, and before summer was far advanced he removed to England, in obedience to medical advice.[1] From Clapham he writes to Sir Walter Scott, on 15th August:—

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I have been here now nearly a month, and I have much satisfaction in telling you that I consider my health improved, partly from a change of residence, and perhaps still more from the advice and prescriptions of Dr. Baillie, which I am now following. He has recommended my spending the winter at least at Brighton, and I propose going there in a few days. The leading point in the advice I have received from my medical friends was to abstain from all business. I have found it quite impossible to do this entirely; but I find I can gradually devote my thoughts and attention to lighter things.

[1] On the 20th March Sir Walter writes from London to Mr. Cadell: —"I am truly sorry to hear from you such an indifferent account of my valued friend Mr. Constable's health. I trust in God it will be restored, for his is a life of uncommon importance to literature, as well as to his friends."

"I have only seen one bookseller, Mr. Robinson of Cheapside, the active and useful agent of my house. It may be no news to you, but it gives me much pleasure to say, that the demand for the works of the Author of Waverley continues as I should wish and expect it to be. I find my friend The Abbot has done better than The Monastery, but still, the stock in hand of both is to a very considerable amount, and there is some grumbling about it in the Row and elsewhere.

"The octavo edition of the Novels and Tales has been extremely well received, but it has interfered somewhat with the original or coarser editions, and purchasers hang back, particularly as to The Abbot and The Monastery, in the hope of getting them one day in the octavo form. I am not certain how the mercantile agreements for these books stand, whether all the copies bargained for have been printed. So far as my house is concerned, this should not form any obstacle in the way of accomplishing what I am about to propose, and I believe my influence with our own agents, who possess 1000 of each, might also secure us against any opposition from them.

"I would be very glad to see Ivanhoe, The Monastery, The Abbot, and Kenilworth in an octavo form, the appearance of which would enable us to gratify those who wish to possess the books in that form, and to a certain extent would be quite a safe speculation. They would make six volumes, and, with the author's approbation, I would propose that they appear under the title of 'Historical Romances by the Author of Waverley.'

"Although I am at present taking no charge of busi-

ness, this subject interests me so much that I cannot refrain from laying the project before you, and I take the liberty of adding, that, should my plans meet the author's views, I think the copyright of these four works might be fairly estimated at £5000,—which sum I would propose to make payable from dates commencing at twelve months, and concluding at thirty-six, which would make five acceptances of £1000 each. You will pardon the freedom I use in addressing you on this subject, and favour me with your opinion as soon as you find it convenient. Direct to the care of Hurst, Robinson, and Co., 90 Cheapside. A. C."

With Mr. Lockhart my father's correspondence had begun so early as December 1814, and it would be very interesting to ascertain the fate of the novel alluded to in the following letter:—

MR. LOCKHART to MR. CONSTABLE.

"MILNBURN, 29*th Decr.* 1814.

"SIR,—I have been amusing myself with writing a novel, and as it chiefly regards Scotland, I should wish to have it printed in Edinburgh. I am sensible that much has been done of late years in the description of our national manners, but there are still, I apprehend, many important classes of Scotch society quite untouched. The hero is one John Todd, a true-blue, who undertakes a journey to London in a Berwick smack, and is present in the metropolis at the same time with the Emperor of Russia and the other illustrious visitors in June last. I

think 'The Romance of the Thistle' might do for a title, and for a motto τοδ' ουν ουδε χθες ουδε τημερον αλλα αει τι.[1] If you wish to see the MS. it is at your service. The whole might be contained in 300 pages 12mo.—I remain, etc., J. G. LOCKHART.

"*P.S.*—I need scarce say that it is to be perfectly anonymous. You may address to me, care of John Bryce, Esq., Jackson Street, Glasgow. J. L."

I do not know what was the tenor of the publisher's reply, but we may presume that it was unfavourable; and it was not until three or four years later, at John Ballantyne's dinner-table, that Mr. Lockhart made the acquaintance of a man whose character and *personnel* he has so variously described, alternately declaring the one to have been generous and disinterested, and crafty and despotic, while the impression produced by the other, on a first introduction, is given in the following passage:—

"It was at one of those Trinity dinners this summer, that I first saw Constable. Being struck with his appearance, I asked Scott who he was, and he told me—expressing some surprise that anybody should have lived a winter or two in Edinburgh without knowing, by sight at least, a citizen whose name was so familiar to the world. I happened to say that I had not been prepared to find the great bookseller a man of such gentlemanlike and even distinguished bearing. Scott smiled, and answered—'Ay, Constable is indeed a grand-looking chield,' adding, that he reminded him of what Fielding said of Joseph Andrews,—that 'he had an air which to those who had not seen many

[1] "A thing—this (τοδ' !)—neither for yesterday nor to-day, but for all time." *John Todd* appears in Matthew Wald, but excepting in the *name*, I find no trace there or elsewhere of this probably unpublished novel.

noblemen would give an idea of nobility.'[1] . . . When I visited Constable, as I often did at a period somewhat later than that of which I now speak, and for the most part in company with Scott, I found the bookseller established in a respectable country gentleman's seat, some six or seven miles out of Edinburgh, and doing the honours of it with all the ease that might have been looked for had he been the long-descended owner of the place;—there was no foppery, no show, no idle luxury, but to all appearance the plain abundance and simple enjoyment of hereditary wealth. His conversation was manly and vigorous, abounding in Scotch anecdotes of the old time, which he told with a degree of spirit and humour only second to his great author's. No man could more effectually control, when he had a mind, either the extravagant vanity which, on too many occasions, made him ridiculous, or the despotic temper, which habitually held in fear and trembling all such as were in any sort dependent on his Czarish Majesty's pleasure. In him I never saw (at this period) anything but the unobtrusive sense and the calm courtesy of a well-bred gentleman."

To the readers of the earlier volumes of this work it is, I apprehend, unnecessary that I say one word in vindication of my father from the charge of ridiculous vanity or of ungenerous despotism. The intercourse between Mr. Lockhart and my father in later years was close and frequent, and I prefer the estimation in which he held the

[1] It may seem trifling, but I cannot resist a temptation to quote corroborative testimony on this subject from the Reverend Julian C. Young, whose "Personal Recollections" have given so much pleasure to the reading public, and the notice of whose death, after a very short illness, has recently caused deep sorrow to his many friends. In a letter lately received he wrote:—"I well remember Archibald Constable. On two occasions I saw him when he called on my father; and a splendid specimen of humanity he was. . . . If I am not mistaken he had a florid complexion, a very handsome face, a presence that would have become a Duke, and a bearing worthy of Mæcenas. . . . How entirely the photograph bears out my recollection of him! acuteness, thoughtfulness, and benevolence in the face—the whole air and bearing truly aristocratic."

still living publisher, both before and after the sad catastrophe of 1826, as manifested in the letters he addressed to him. Well it is that *littera scripta manet.*

On the 24th September 1821 my father wrote to Mr. Lockhart from Brighton, where he spent some months before settling for the winter at Castlebeare Park, in the neighbourhood of London :—

"*Private and Confidential.*

"MY DEAR SIR,— . . . Although I do not interest myself about matters of business generally, nor indeed have I the desire at this moment that it should ever be so again, yet there are some projects which I cannot separate from my thoughts. I wish the present letter to convey to you the particulars of these, and before I conclude I shall not omit to beg your excuse for the liberty I have taken in communicating with you about them.

"I am sure you would regret the death of Mr. John Ballantyne; he was a very clever man, and possessed far better talents than many who used to laugh with him in hours of merriment spent in his company. His death to me was very unexpected. I was aware his frame was none of the stoutest, but I thought nature had so formed him that he was likely to last long; and, as one of my medical friends observed of myself lately, I imagined our poor friend John one of those who would take 'a great deal of killing;' the cares of the world, as Creech used to say in the story of the Dalkeith Doctor, 'never pickit upon him.'

"I suppose the scheme of the British Novelists will now be given up; it was, I believe, by no means a suc-

cessful one in point of sale, arising altogether, as a bookseller would say, from the mode in which it was got up. A collection of novels must not be printed in a small type like a newspaper, a *Corpus Juris*, or a book of reference; and in the present times of good and rather expensive taste, there will be no very great number of readers found for works requiring a magnifying-glass, or at all events spectacles. I have a scheme for a publication of novel-writers which I must now beg permission to submit to you.

"The style and manner of the octavo edition of the Novels and Tales of the Author of Waverley seems to take well with the public. My proposition would be to publish as many of the works of the best novel-writers as could be comprehended in twenty-five octavo volumes,—each volume to contain from 50 to 100 pages more letter-press, and to be printed in a type one size smaller than the Tales. Whatever authors are thought worthy of insertion ought I presume all to be complete: Richardson fills a large space, but would be indispensable, I fancy, and, with Smollett and Fielding, would occupy two-thirds of the collection; the others I will not here take it upon me to suggest. I would have Biographical Notices to the works of each author. Sir Walter Scott has already written the Lives of Fielding and Smollett, and if the Life of Richardson were written, two-thirds of the whole would be ready to go to press. While these volumes were printing, getting forward the others—I would take the liberty of suggesting—might in the course of next year form the morning's amusement at Abbotsford, and

be perhaps some relief from more important labour. Such a work however could not be undertaken under any other name than that of Sir Walter Scott.

"To follow this undertaking I would propose a similar one, of the works of British Poets, exactly in the same style, and no double columns used in printing. All the Collections of English Poets are encumbered with a vast quantity of trash, never looked at by the reader of taste. There will probably be more labour in preparing the Biographical Notices for this work, but there is no need for these being very long, and in general the materials are abundant. These two books together will be 50 volumes, the very sight of which would make our friend James Ballantyne leap with joy. I would have engraved titles, with vignettes to each volume, but no other embellishments.

"I would not have written to you on this subject, only that I fear Sir Walter Scott will think me troublesome with my letters. You can take a convenient opportunity to communicate the contents of this to him. The terms I have thought of for the copyright of the Notices and Name, would be to grant an acceptance for £500, at twelve months' date, on the completion at press of every five volumes successively, but I would make the acceptance for the last five volumes of each book £1000, instead £500,—in this way the copyright of the two would be £6000. Both books might be published in the course of two years; but as the undertakings are large, after once being commenced they will require to go on regularly. I think both would succeed very well, and would be highly

creditable to all concerned; and I hope you will not refuse your aid in bringing about the transaction. Allow me to request that any communication on this important subject be transmitted direct to myself, here. After I have heard from Sir Walter or you on this subject, I have another but lesser project in contemplation. Here I daresay you will smile, and say, 'This is not like a man in bad health, or one in a great degree retired from the world.' I assure you I have not permitted myself to think of almost any other concerns in the way of business; but I have a delight in contemplating the plans now submitted to you, and their success I think will be unquestionably good, and would every six or seven years for a long while to come, I hope, be the means of bringing some additional grist to the mill of the printers and paper-makers of Scotland.—Yours, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

MR. LOCKHART to MR. CONSTABLE.

"CHIEFSWOOD, BY MELROSE, *September* 28, 1821.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I received your letter this morning, and I assure you both I and your other friends here are most sincerely rejoiced with the intelligence of your health being so much improved since you left Scotland. I trust ere long we may all have the pleasure of seeing you once more among us, and hail with much satisfaction the proof your letter affords of the unsubdued energy, activity, and enterprise of your mind. If you are really ill, and can nevertheless form such schemes and write

such letters, I am sure it is no flattery to say that you are the only bookseller extant capable of the like.

"I have shown your letter to Sir Walter, and he bids me say that, under some modifications, he thinks it very possible he may think seriously of the scheme you propose. He sees, notwithstanding, many difficulties *in limine*, and, on the whole, I think it is best to say for the present that he will write you himself, or commission me to do so at length, in the course of a few days. Considering the magnitude of your undertaking, you will not be surprised with this delay.

"I have not been in Edinburgh these three months, and am therefore pretty much as ignorant of the news of Auld Reekie as you can be. My wife and I are established in the little cottage which you saw ere its roof was on. I hope next summer you will come and see it, and not like it the worse for that addition. Sir Walter desires to be most kindly remembered to you; he says he was just about to write a long letter to you when I furnished him with this additional theme of correspondence.—Believe me, very sincerely yours, J. G. LOCKHART."

Sir Walter's promised letter was written at Abbotsford on the 30th September. It is as follows:—

"To A. Constable, Esq.

"ABBOTSFORD, 30*th September* 1821.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—I am very ungraciously indebted to you for your two kind communications, and there is no great reason why I should have incurred this guilt, because I have never had any hesitation about the

acceptation of your liberal offer contained in your letter dated from Clapham, 15th August last, being the sum of £5000 for Ivanhoe, The Monastery, The Abbot, and Kenilworth, in full and complete copyright, which sum of £5000 should be made payable by five acceptances of £1000 each, the dates commencing at 12 months and concluding in 36 months, all which is quite agreeable to me; only I think that after the lapse of 18 months the moiety of the sum which would then continue due should bear interest, as the stock purchased will be then making return. But this is a matter of little consequence. I have only to add that I approve greatly of your plan, and with your spirit and activity I have no doubt of its success. You may consider it as quite settled, and set to work as soon as possible. The acceptances, etc., will do very well in November; you can instruct Mr. Cadell, as I have some land to pay.

"I am now going to speak of your letter to J. G. Lockhart, which shows in a remarkable degree the energy and enterprise of your mind.

"Your observations on the shape of John's novels, poor fellow, seem very just, yet the Eastern Tales are now out of print, and in great request; still, however, John's stock stands in our way. I suspect that to take away the Lives would be to take the plums out of the porridge, and reduce the whole to waste paper. Now, although the Lives were given him without any gratuity, and are consequently at my own disposal, I do not think I can well enter into another transaction, the event of which must be considerable loss to the estate on which I am a trustee.

If any plans could be fallen upon to dispose of these works so as to save loss—at least this stumbling-block would be out of my way; but in the present circumstances I do not see how it is to be got over.

"My next objection is to give my name *out and out* to a collection of this nature; I mean to put it on the title-page—for I should have no objection at all to date the Lives from this place, and of course the advertisements, as in cases where the thing was authorized. In all other respects the plan is perfectly agreeable to me, and I could have Lockhart's assistance to carry it through. I think it would run further than you are aware of. We should have all Charlotte Smith's very entertaining novels, which are not property; the same with Mrs. Radcliffe's, but I fear they are hardly out. Miss Burney's must be out, all but the last, which is scarce worth including. Richardson is a heavy dog, but I fear we cannot do without him.

"The Poets might lie for future consideration; they would be a much more troublesome job, and I fear it would be difficult to give novelty. Consider, there is Dr. Johnson and Tom Campbell. Certainly a good selection would throw out one-half of what is generally crammed into these formidable collections. Lockhart and I have often thought of a collection of Historians, but I fear the work would be heavy on sale.

"By the way, Lockhart finished, or nearly so, for John Ballantyne, a new edition of Don Quixote, with Ozell's last but very full and curious annotations, and remarkably good translations of all the Spanish ballads alluded

to in the work. This I think a desideratum in English literature, and I believe many booksellers would be desirous to have it. If I recollect right, the copy-money was to be £300 or £350; I meant to do it myself, and made some progress, but Lockhart being a much better Spaniard, and I having never been, I gave him my materials. I have no doubt Ballantyne's Trust would part with it for a very moderate profit above prime cost; three volumes are printed, and might be sent to you that you might see the nature and style of the illustrations. Frankly, I would much rather you had them than another.

"The thing you wot of [The Pirate] is cracking on well. The next will be a tale, I think, of the days of gentle King Jemmy, our Scottish Solomon. It is a pity that rare mixture of sense and nonsense, pedantry and childishness, wit and folly, should remain uncelebrated. It is attempted in the work called Forman, but not with a strong hand. If you can suggest anything about the period I will be happy to hear from you; you are always happy in your hints. You are right not to vex yourself with thinking minutely or anxiously about business, but in a general way nothing that amuses you can come much amiss. When I was so dreadfully ill that I could hardly speak five minutes without loss of breath, I found that the exertion of dictating the nonsense of Captain Dalgetty to William Laidlaw suspended for a time the sense of my situation. Indeed, what can one think of, except the topics which are most interesting him? and though I would not permit them to rule me like a nightmare, yet one might as well think of changing his nature entirely;

as to banish them altogether out of his reflections. And so, courage, my good friend: we shall live to do many clever things together yet.

"The news from Edinburgh are very distressing, for with the usual degree of party spirit there has existed of late a degree of violence which will be slaked, I fear, with nothing but blood; I expect daily to hear that some one is killed. The *Scotsman* and *Review* have much to answer for. I have kept L. out of the scrape, in which some of the young men are knee-deep.

"My own case is whimsical enough. I was fairly forced, contrary to my own judgment, and to all that I proposed, to join in a bond of credit for the paper, and now they have turned me out without consulting whether I thought it handsome or honourable to retreat at such a period. So I am sad and sulky, for I think the seniors might have been mediators, not fugitives.[1]

"I have written a great deal, but have still to thank you for the great kindness you have shown about the wine, which arrived in the most perfect safety in Edinburgh, and will be here next week. The lots are extremely moderate, and as I shall have some cash at Coutts's next week, I will send an order for the amount.

"You have such a genius for finding out all that your friends want, that perhaps you may light on some old oak-panelling in the course of your researches. I should like much to make a purchase of that kind for fitting up my future library.

[1] Sir Walter here alludes to *The Beacon*, for which publication he had unhappily allowed himself to become a responsible party.

"I beg my best regards to Mrs. Constable, David, if arrived, you, and all your family. I sincerely hope and trust your naturally strong constitution may recruit itself by ease and exercise, and that you will, like me, pay the fine and renew the lease of the precarious tenement. In the best period of my health I was never better than at present, bating that my joints are, of course, stiffer than they were. I make a point of riding or walking two or three hours at least every day, and Lockhart's cottage at two miles forms a pleasant object for my exercise. Pray let me hear from you at your leisure, and believe me, with much regard and many good wishes, very sincerely yours,

"WALTER SCOTT."

The plans regarding which Sir Walter thus writes, and of which the complimentary letter from Mr. Lockhart which I have cited[1] does not at least imply disapproval, are characterized by the latter as "extravagant projects,"[2] and introduced to the public in the following passages of the Biography:—

"In August appeared the volume of the Novelist's Library, containing Scott's Life of Smollett; and it being now ascertained that John Ballantyne had died a debtor, the editor offered to proceed with this series of prefaces, on the footing that the whole profits of the work should go to his widow. Mr. Constable, whose health was now beginning to break, had gone southwards in quest of more genial air, and was at Hastings [Brighton] when he heard of this proposition. He immediately wrote to me, entreating me to represent to Sir Walter that the undertaking, having been coldly received at first, was unlikely to grow in favour if continued on the same plan—that in his opinion the bulk of the volumes, and the small type of their text, had been

[1] See *ante*, p. 157.

[2] See Life, vol. v. p. 122.

unwisely chosen for a work of mere entertainment, and could only be suitable for one of reference; that Ballantyne's Novelist's Library, therefore, ought to be stopped at once, and another in a lighter shape, to range with the late collected edition of the first series of the Waverley Romances, announced with his own name as publisher, and Scott's as editor. He proposed at the same time to commence the issue of a Select Library of English Poetry, with prefaces and a few notes by the same hand; and calculating that each of these collections should extend to twenty-five volumes, and that the publication of both might be concluded within two years—'the writing of the prefaces, etc., forming perhaps an occasional relief from more important labours!'—the bookseller offered to pay their editor in all the sum of £6000: a small portion of which sum, as he hinted [where?], would undoubtedly be more than Mrs. John Ballantyne could ever hope to derive from the prosecution of her husband's last publishing adventure. Various causes combined to prevent the realization of these magnificent projects. Scott now, as at the beginning of his career of speculation, had views about what a collection of English Poetry should be, in which even Constable could not, on consideration, be made to concur; and I have already explained the coldness with which he regarded further attempts upon our Elder Novelists. The Ballantyne Library crept on to the tenth volume, and was then dropped abruptly; and the double negotiation with Constable was never renewed."

From the allusion here to Mrs. John Ballantyne, it might be inferred that my father's interest in that lady was neither generous nor active. I find, on the contrary, from her letters in my possession, that he embraced every opportunity that presented itself to do her service. She writes on the 28th June 1822:—"My husband used often to say to me that he was certain he should know what was passing on earth after he was dead. I have no faith in this; but if it be really so, he must be comforted by your kindness to his poor widow."

The following letter from my father is in reply to Sir Walter's of the 30th September:—

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"CASTLEBEARE PARK, EALING, MIDDLESEX,
3d November 1821.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I have been greatly too long in replying to your very kind and obliging letter, which duly reached me at Brighton. Some portion of my time has been taken up since in quest of a residence for the winter, and I am at last fixed here in an excellent house, standing in a field of twenty acres, nearly one-third covered by fine elms two centuries old, gardens, etc. The situation is very dry, and said to be very healthy. It was lately the residence of a wealthy London citizen, who left it in the best order—much too good for me; but with this as with other things I must endeavour to be content.

"I shall in a very few days have the pleasure of writing very fully to you on the various important matters of your last. In the meantime your drafts on A. C. and Co., for the copyrights of the four works named in your letter of the 30th September, will be accepted at my house in Edinburgh. They will, I think, require to be drawn as under,[1] and we shall make the amount five thousand guineas instead of five thousand pounds. I wish I had *golden guineas* for the sum at my hand, and to save trouble you should have them, and of the *full weight* into the bargain,—not as it has been recorded of Jacob Tonson's of old, who used to settle—with Dryden I think it was—in *light silver*. The wares with which the booksellers of the present time go to market are better than those of Tonson's days, and thus the source of modern liberality.

[1] The terms of the draft are not given in my copy of this letter.

"New editions of the Historical Romances, in octavo and post, are now, I presume, in the printing-office. I learn there will be besides a great press of other works in hand for this winter and next spring, and as we are all much interested in their progress, perhaps the commencement of the new and great scheme should stand over for a year. But all this shall be adjusted to your wish.

"I should be very happy to undertake the edition of Don Quixote by our friend Lockhart. Perhaps you would have the goodness to desire Mr. Ballantyne to forward the paper and print account with a copy of the book to me, through the medium of the High Street, that my partner may see the book in its progress here. My health continues much as it has been for the last two months. I live a very quiet retired life, in which I shall endeavour to persevere; but there has been much sickness in my family. Two of my daughters have been very ill, but they are getting round again.

"Castlebeare Park, as it is called, is the next house to that of the late Duke of Kent. I was in the Duke's the other day, and saw two fine pictures, that had not been bid for at the sale of his Royal Highness's effects, of his late Majesty and the Queen, painted, I think, by Sir Wm. Beechy. Have you any desire, if to be had cheap, to possess them? I have some fine old oak carved furniture and panelling in view for you.—I am, etc., A. C."

Mr. Lockhart thus alludes to the arrangement above mentioned, and gives his view of the position of affairs at the time it was concluded:[1]—

[1] See Life, vol. v. pp. 147-150.

"Sir Walter concluded, before he went to town in November, another negotiation of importance with this house. They agreed to give for the remaining copyright of the four novels published between December 1819 and January 1821—to wit, Ivanhoe, The Monastery, The Abbot, and Kenilworth—the sum of five thousand guineas. The stipulation about not revealing the author's name, under a penalty of £2000, was repeated. By these four novels, the fruits of scarcely more than twelve months' labour, he had already cleared at least £10,000 before this bargain was completed. They, like their predecessors, were now issued in a collective shape, under the title of 'Historical Romances, by the Author of Waverley.'

"I cannot pretend to guess what the actual state of Scott's pecuniary affairs was at the time when John Ballantyne's death relieved them from one great source of complication and difficulty. But I have said enough to satisfy every reader, that when he began the second, and far the larger division of his building at Abbotsford, he must have contemplated the utmost sum it could cost him as a mere trifle in relation to the resources at his command. He must have reckoned on clearing £30,000 at least in the course of a couple of years by the novels written within such a period. The publisher of his Tales, who best knew how they were produced, and what they brought of gross profit, and who must have had the strongest interest in keeping the author's name untarnished by any risk or reputation of failure, would willingly, as we have seen, have given him £6000 more within a space of two years for works of a less serious sort, likely to be despatched at leisure hours, without at all interfering with the main manufacture. But alas! even this was not all. Messrs. Constable had such faith in the prospective fertility of his imagination, that they were by this time quite ready to sign bargains and grant bills for novels and romances to be produced hereafter, but of which the subjects and the names were alike unknown to them and to the man from whose pen they were to proceed. A forgotten satirist well says,—

> 'The active principle within
> Works on some brains the effects of gin;'

but in his case, every external influence combined to stir the flame, and swell the intoxication of restless exuberant energy. His allies knew, indeed, what he did not, that the sale of his novels was rather less than it had been in the days of Ivanhoe; and hints had sometimes been dropped to him that it might be well to try the effect of a pause. But he always thought—and James Ballantyne had decidedly the same

opinion—that his best things were those which he threw off the most easily and swiftly; and it was no wonder that his booksellers, seeing how immeasurably even his worst excelled in popularity, as in merit, any other person's best, should have shrunk from the experiment of a decisive damper. On the contrary, they might be excused for from time to time flattering themselves that if the books sold at a less rate, this might be counterpoised by still greater rapidity of production. They could not make up their minds to cast the peerless vessel adrift; and, in short, after every little whisper of prudential misgiving, echoed the unfailing burden of Ballantyne's song—to push on, hoisting more and more sail as the wind lulled.

"He was as eager to do as they could be to suggest—and this I well knew at the time. I had, however, no notion, until all his correspondence lay before me, of the extent to which he had permitted himself thus early to build on the chances of life, health, and continued popularity. Before the Fortunes of Nigel issued from the press, Scott had exchanged instruments, and received his bookseller's bills for no less than four 'works of fiction'—not one of them otherwise described in the deeds of agreement—to be produced in unbroken succession, each of them to fill at least three volumes, but with proper saving clauses as to increase of copy-money in case any of them should run to four. And within two years all this anticipation had been wiped off by Peveril of the Peak, Quentin Durward, St. Ronan's Well, and Redgauntlet; and the new castle was by that time complete, and overflowing with all its splendour; but by that time the end also was approaching!

"The splendid romance of The Pirate was published in the beginning of December 1821; and the wild freshness of its atmosphere, the beautiful contrast of Minna and Brenda, and the exquisitely drawn character of Captain Cleveland, found the reception which they deserved."

Sydney Smith does not seem to have shared the general admiration of this novel. He writes to my father as follows:—

"FOSTON, *December* 21, 1821.

"DEAR SIR,—I am much obliged by your kindness in sending me The Pirate. You know how much I admire

the genius of the author, but even that has its limits, and is exhaustible. I am afraid this novel will depend upon the former reputation of the author, and will add nothing to it. It may sell, and another may *half* sell, but that is all, unless he comes out with something vigorous, and redeems himself. I do not blame him for writing himself out, if he knows he is doing so, and has done his *best*, and his *all*. I am for the mixture of history and fiction. If the native land of Scotland will supply no more scenes and characters, for he is always best in Scotland, though he was very good in England the [time] he was there; but pray (wherever the scene is laid) no more *Meg Merrilies* and *Dominie Sampson*—very good the first and second times, but now quite worn out, and always recurring. All human themes have an end (except Taxation); but I shall heartily regret my annual amusement, if I am about to lose it. I am very sorry to hear you are unwell; it is because you are so rich. If you were poor and had much to fret you, you would be better; but do not be alarmed, you have yet twenty or thirty years good. When you go off at that distant period, I think you should leave me a handsome legacy in books, as the first person who gave you a start in life. —Your sincere well-wisher, SYDNEY SMITH."

CHAPTER VIII.

Letters to Sir Walter Scott, containing many literary suggestions, among others an annotated edition of Shakespeare—Interesting replies by Sir Walter Scott.

MR. LOCKHART quotes one letter from among those written by my father from England to Sir Walter in the earlier part of 1822, and regards it as indicating a mind unhinged by disease. I shall give my readers an opportunity of judging for themselves, by quoting not only that letter, but others of which I happen to possess copies, along with a few from Sir Walter Scott, to which some of them owe their origin, and which show the cordiality and interest with which he received the literary suggestions of his publisher. Mr. Lockhart says:[1]—

"The ardent bookseller's brain seems to have been well-nigh unsettled at this period; and I have often thought that the foxglove which he then swallowed (his complaint being a threatening of water in the chest) might have had a share in the extravagant excitement of his mind. Occasionally, however, he enters on details as to which, or at least as to Sir Walter's share in them, there could not have been any mistake; and these were, it must be owned, of a nature well calculated to nourish and sustain in the author's fancy a degree of almost mad exhilaration, near akin to his publisher's own predominant mood."

[1] See Life, vol. v. p. 173.

Be this as it may, the letters I shall now give not only prove how useful my father's bibliographic and historical knowledge often was to the great novelist, but the high appreciation in which it was held by him.

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"CASTLEBEARE PARK, 14 *Feby.* 1822.

"Allow me as an old correspondent to offer you my best acknowledgments for The Pirate, which it will be no news to you to hear has been eagerly sought after in the South, and met much public approbation. My copy, secluded as my situation is, has been in considerable requisition, and in its travels is now in the hands of the venerable General Dumouriez, who resides a very little way off this mansion. He was the only person in the neighbourhood to whom in my present state of health I had any inclination to be known. I had the pleasure of being introduced to him, and we have since exchanged civilities. The General is at a very advanced period of life. He was born in the year 1739, and is a truly interesting old gentleman, rather of short stature, with much of an Englishman's expression of countenance, extremely intelligent; indeed, he is altogether what I would suppose one of our own noblesse to have been who followed the fortunes of Prince Charles.

"With regard to the period of King James, which you did me the honour to mention, I do not know that I have anything very particular to suggest for your consideration. I possess some original letters—of the Duke of Lennox and Richmond, who accompanied James to England, of

which I have the pleasure of sending you a transcript. They relate chiefly to the Duke's private concerns, but contain some few notices not unworthy of your perusal. He was a remarkable person, and had, I believe, three or four wives; the death of one of them is referred to in one of his letters, but the event does not appear to have occasioned him any particular grief. There was a divorce or some law-process between this lady and Lennox; but that of course will be fully known to you. The letters are addressed to Sir William Livingstone of Kilsyth, who was commissioner of the Lennox estates, and a person of some consideration in Scotland. I had once a greater number of similar letters, but by some means or other they have diminished. I am not sure but I gave one or two of them to Mr. Charles Kirkpatrick Sharpe; if I did so they are safe. There is a portrait of a Duchess of Richmond in Captain Smith's account of Virginia, which you have seen, and on the same sheet or print there is a portrait of the Lady Rebecca (Pocahontas), the daughter of Powhatan—a king of Virginia, who married an Englishman of the name of Rolf. It is a good many years since I looked into Smith's work, and I do not now remember what he says of this Lady Rebecca, but I think she was introduced at Court by the Duchess of Richmond, and I dare say was one of the remarkable personages of that day. She came to England in 1616, and died at Gravesend the following year, as I learn from a passage which I extract from Josselyn's Voyages to New England. London, 1674. 12mo.

"1613.—'Mr. John Rolf, a gentleman of good behaviour, fell in

love with Pocahontas, the only daughter of Powhatan, a king in Virginia, and married her. She was christened, and called the Lady Rebecca, and died at Gravesend 1617. Sir Lewis Stukely brought up her son, Thomas Rolf.'—P. 246.

"1614.—'Powhatan's daughter in Virginia christened Rebecca.'—P. 246.

"1616.—'Pocahontas, and Mr. Rolf her husband, went for England with Sir Thomas Dale, and arrived at Plymouth 12th of June.'—P. 247.

"There is a tract on Virginia containing a pretty full account of the christening of this lady, her courtship, and marriage with Mr. Rolf, written by 'Raphe Hamor the yonger, secretarie in that colony'—London, 1615, 4to—of which I send you the use. This is an extremely rare tract,—Mr. Ticknor told me he had never seen any other copy of it. You have along with it the history and present state of Virginia by a native of the place (R. Beverley Shehene), London, 1705, 8vo, in which there are some further particulars of Pocahontas, commencing in page 25. As these two books belong to a small set of American rarities, I would trouble you to return them to my son, No. 95 Princes Street; and if you have no further occasion for Nicholl's Progresses and Processions, you may also have the goodness to send it at the same time. Perhaps, after all, you will care little about this 'Pocahontas,' but her history, so far as I know, has never yet been perfectly told. A work under the title of '*Pocahontas*' would make the fortune of us all.

"Along with the Duke of Lennox's letters you will find a copy of one also addressed to Sir William Livingstone of Kilsyth by Margaret Hartsyde, from Whythall, and relating to the Queen's 'Jewell,' which, I believe, she had

stolen. I have not at present access to any books to enable me to state anything more of Margaret's history, but I think there is something on the subject in the State Trials—Arnot or M'Laurin. I applied to a friend for information on this subject, who has access to the documents in the State Paper Office,[1] in order to examine the Records of Privy Council during James's reign, but they were unfortunately burnt at the fire which happened at Whitehall some years ago.

"You are too well acquainted with everything that has been published relative to King James and his times for me, absent from books as I am at present, to suppose I can add anything to your store of information. There were, however, two or three little books published shortly after James's death, of his sayings and maxims, of which I can give you the titles—some of them must be in the Advocates' Library—and it might be worth the trouble to inquire after them. They are—

"1*st.* Apophthegms—Sayings, Maxims of King James, Lord Bacon (and another), small 12mo. This I know was in the Advocates' Library.

"2. Flores Regii or Proverbes, and Aphorisms of King James, collected by L. S.; London, 1627; very small.

"3. Regales Aphorismi, or a Royal Chain of Golden Sentences, by King James; London, 1650.

"I would also recommend your looking into

"*Idœa sive de Jacobi Magnæ Britanniæ, Galliæ et Hyberniæ præstantissimi et augustissimi Regis, virtutibus et ornamentis, dilucida Enarratio eiusque cum laudatissimis veterum regibus, monarchis et imperatoribus comparatio exacta et enuncleata—Authore Thoma Rosa, Scoto-Britanno, Londini,* 1608.

[1] Mr. George Chalmers. See vol. i. p. 459.

"Josselyn's Voyages to New England is an uncommon book, and I have extracted all that relates to this particular subject. This last is a scarce book, but I should think might be had in the Advocates' Library, and is a very small volume. You are of course acquainted with Wilkinson's Sermon, 'The Merchant Royal,' a very singular performance, preached at the nuptials of the Lord and Lady Hay, about the year 1608. There were several editions of it, with a representation of a man-of-war (a ship of war, I should say) on the title-page. The preacher compares a good wife to a good ship, and, if I am not mistaken, in a manner similar to that of Lady Juliana Berners in regard to the properties of a good woman and a good horse,—an odd enough combination certainly.

"There is an account of King James's first journey into England after Elizabeth's death in Nicholl's Progresses, which will be familiar to you. He visited the father of Oliver Cromwell at Huntington, and was present at the funeral of an Earl of Winton, at Seaton Chapel, on the day he left Edinburgh. The spot has been pointed out to me at Seaton where he stood on the occasion. I wish the Earl of Wemyss could be prevailed upon to prevent this fine ruin going to final decay. You have of course seen it.

"There is a quarto pamphlet giving an account of the reception of King James at Edinburgh on his return to Scotland, drawn up by Sir Alex. Hay, Clerk, of which there is unquestionably a copy in the Advocates' Library. I have myself an account of the entertainment of King James, printed in London about the year 1612, but I

cannot now particularly describe it. I am quite aware that it is hardly worth your while to be thus troubled, fearing, as I do, that I have mentioned nothing which is not very insignificant, though all in some degree illustrate manners and customs, which I know never fail to interest you.

"There were, I believe, many sermons preached, and some printed, on the subject of the Gowrie Conspiracy. I have one of them myself; it is a very singular performance, but I have no access to it at present. It was preached in the chapel of Whitehall, a short time after James's accession to the English throne. Andrewes, Bishop of Winchester (I believe), accompanied James to Scotland; and as I am on the subject of sermons, a kind of research of which I dare say you would not have suspected me, I am induced to point out to you a sermon of the Bishop's preached before the King and his Court at Holyroodhouse Chapel, which will be found in a folio volume of his. There are often in sermons very odd expressions, and occasionally curious historical matter to be gleaned; for the same reason I take the liberty of recommending you to look into the works of William Cowper, Bishop of Galloway, also of the age of King James; they are likewise in folio, and to be found in the Advocates' Library.

"The people of this country admire Ivanhoe and Kenilworth beyond all modern productions, a proof that the author is quite safe and perfectly at home in occupying English ground, and I am delighted to hear that the forthcoming production entirely does so. Having little or no

business at present to engage my attention, my mind often goes back to the events of former times—indeed, I am not quite certain that I have not retained more of what I have read of the Rebellion of the year 1715 than I could repeat to you of the public events of my own day; it is a period of great interest; the fate and character of the Earl of Derwentwater would afford a very fine and as yet an untouched subject. 'Radcliffe' would be quite admirable, and we have not had anything from Northumberland. You must have found in John Bell's collection many of the popular ballads and pieces, which are yet current in that county, relative to the Radcliffe family. The battle of Sheriffmuir would help the subject greatly. I have a considerable collection of printed papers, mostly in folio size, relative to this period, which I should have great pleasure in communicating.

"I know you have a copy of the Memoirs of the Lord Sinclair who was engaged in the Rebellion of 1715, which I think you told me was extremely curious; when there are fewer matters of importance going on it would certainly be worth while to print this MS. I think it is in the form of personal narrative. I know that your own collection is very complete as to the second Rebellion, in 1745. The Chevalier Johnstone's work, published last year, is remarkably interesting, but I conjecture has been very indifferently translated, and published with a very absurd preface. Personal narratives are in general very interesting.

"I lately met with a MS. journal of a Scots surgeon, and a native of Dunkeld, of the middle of the last century,

containing some curious enough matter relative to the Athol family, and the doings of those days. I send you a sight of it. I have annexed a memorandum of my idea as to the author, but I have some reason to consider it not very accurate; it could not be difficult to ascertain this point were it worth inquiring after. He had been a very odd fellow, and it would appear had written several other volumes of a similar kind, which I fear are not now to be found. I hope the perusal of this MS. will amuse you, particularly the adventure in a London coffee-house, on board of Leith traders, etc.

"I believe I formerly took the liberty of saying something of the period of the Spanish Armada, another admirable subject,—even the Laird of Anstruther would come in for a niche. He was the son of 'Fisher Willie,' and an original member of a certain celebrated club, of which the late Laird of Innergelly was many years sovereign. You have the chair of Admiral Don ——(I forget his name), wrecked on the Fair Isle; another of the Spanish commanders was picked up near the Isle of May in a boat, and brought into Anstruther, where many questions were put to him by the Laird, and what passed on the occasion has been recorded by James Melvil, then minister of Anstruther, in his memoirs, written by himself, now in the Advocates' Library. The Earl of Effingham had a distinguished command in the fleet, and perhaps there could not be a better title than 'Effingham.' The materials for this history are very abundant. There were several tracts printed at the time of the Armada. I purchased one of them at the Roxburghe sale for the Ad-

vocates' Library, entitled 'Copie of a Letter, etc., relative to the Losses and Wreck of the Spanish Navie, on the Coasts of Ireland and Scotland;' and there is a printed list of the nobility and gentry of England who associated to defend the country, with the sums subscribed by each. I have a copy of this; it is a quarto pamphlet.

"I believe James Melvil's report of what passed on the examination of the Spaniard is in the form of a memorial, and will be found at the end of the MS. of his memoirs, of which the Advocates have the original, and there is also a transcript of it in the Signet Library. I hope Dr. M'Crie will publish an edition of this valuable document. James Melvil was by far the most remarkable of the two brothers. They were sons of the Laird of Carnbee, near to the spot where I was born. The old mansion-house of Carnbee, an object of my early veneration, has been recently levelled for the purpose of building a stable and cow-house. There is an old arms of the Melvils still left in a part of what remains—but only of the 17th century—and it was the only thing to be traced of them when I last visited the place. Sir James Galloway, Lord Dunkeld, whose prophecies you have in MS., acquired the property, which was sold to Anstruther of Balcaskie, about eighty years ago, Lord Dunkeld having been in the Rebellion of 1745. I saw the last Sinclair of *Roslin* here when I was quite a youth. He was pointed out to me by the children as the man without a *shadow*, from a supposed connexion with the devil. He passed the last years of his life at *Lochty*, in this neighbourhood. This I think you will acknowledge is desultory matter, more

fitting, you will say, for an idle man to give than for one so busy as yourself to receive or to peruse.

"There was a book in the Gordonstoun Library, the title of which I do not remember, and I have no copy of the catalogue here to refer to, the production of a Scots Catholic who fled after the Reformation, and printed somewhere in France. It contained a very curious dialogue on matters of religion, which the author had had with King James, and I remember an expression of his Majesty, which occurred often when differing in opinion with the author, and which I suppose had been one of the King's customary phrases,—all of us have heard it, but not very often—'Buff, buff, man; I say it's a' buff, I say,'—and so I dread may be said of this letter—but I am, in truth, with the utmost respect, etc., A. C."

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"CASTLEBEARE PARK, EALING, MIDDLESEX,
February 1822.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—My health is now so much better that I anticipate returning to Scotland, if I experience no relapse, whenever the season of the year shall be sufficiently favourable for my undertaking such a journey. I have been here now four months. The place is altogether far beyond my wants; but its dry situation, the retirement of it, and other circumstances, induced me to be the tenant of what others might perhaps have more suitably occupied. I have however been getting better almost daily—which was my first object; indeed, I am sure it will please you to know that my complaints have

so abated, that, from my own feelings and Dr. Baillie's opinion, I begin to have some confidence that I am still to survive, though great care will be necessary: this it will be my endeavour to observe. I cannot hope to be able for the same extent of activity as that in which you have seen me for many years; I trust, however, I may be so in a more moderate degree, and yet enjoy a reasonable portion of happiness, resulting from my previous exertions, of which I cannot say it has been my lot to experience much hitherto.

"I hope the transaction of the copyright was settled to your wish. I desired that the addition of interest should be made to the last bills. With regard to the plan of British Novel-Writers, I hope it will go on. I have various important views regarding that undertaking, about which I need not trouble you at present, and I shall indeed be sorry if the stock of our deceased friend Mr. Ballantyne should not be brought to a good market. It shall not fail in being so from the want of my good wishes, and, believe me, I cannot feel a less interest in regard to the edition of Don Quixote, which, however, it is a sad pity had not been printed on better paper, and made altogether a handsomer-looking book.

"The works of British Poets would no doubt have been a serious undertaking, but it would have had no competitor in the market. If I were not alarmed at the hazard of being called a projector, I would now mention other things which might be subtituted for the British Poets. I am aware that it would be unwise to undertake too much at once. Indeed, it cannot be done, and large

concerns must, as a matter of course, be the work of time; but you have always received my suggestions with such uniformly kind indulgence, that I can still lay them before you without reserve or dread of misconception, and shall now state to you as briefly as I can those to which I have just alluded and hinted at in my letter to Mr. Lockhart. At all events, it cannot do any harm that I commit to my best friend my professional projects, of whatever nature they may be. Most of those hitherto acted upon have, I hope, done no injury to the literary character of the age. I have perhaps often erred in having aims where my own interest was too little the object, and whatever others may have done, I have often suffered by the result. It is needless for me to say that this can have no reference to any of the many and important engagements with you, which have hitherto been so mutually advantageous, as they must doubtless continue to be. I am not insensible to the many and almost unrivalled advantages of professional reputation I have enjoyed as your publisher, and shall not at present attempt to convey my dutiful sense of this by any mere expressions of gratitude of which I might be capable.

"In looking over a bookseller's catalogue lately—which, indeed, is one of my amusements—I met with an extraordinary article, a collection of all that had been written about Shakespeare, consisting of no fewer than one hundred articles. I sent to inquire the price, but—as Henry Beaufoy used to say, 'We make money of everything in London, sir'—and it was sold. Had it remained, and not been enormously expensive, it was my

intention, by hook or by crook, to have it sent to Abbotsford.

"I had just previously to this looked into the new edition of Malone by Mr. Boswell, which is a very valuable book; but really few people care so much about the various readings and texts of Shakespeare as to purchase twenty vols. octavo, if they had an opportunity of being supplied with a more readable book at less expense, and in fewer volumes. In my early days, Johnson and Steevens was to be had in ten volumes; but it increased to fourteen or fifteen under honest George Steevens, and Isaac Reid completed the job by extending Shakespeare to twenty-one volumes. General readers don't want the prefaces and notes of all the commentators on the author, nor to have a book loaded with so much minute black-letter illustration.

"An edition of the immortal bard might be brought out in twelve or fourteen volumes, with a set of readable and amusing notes. There ought, besides, to be an introductory volume, written on purpose, giving a general view of Shakespeare's life, writings, times, and also an account of the labours of former editors: but there is only one individual into whose hands such an undertaking could be put, to embrace and secure all the advantages which I would conceive it necessary to have accomplished, and to enable the publishers to propose to that individual sufficient remuneration for such a work. At present I shall not say more; but I trust you will give it your best consideration, and if you honour me by any reply to this or any other part of my letter, allow me to request

that it may come to myself direct, here. I could, I believe, still get you nearly a complete set of all that has been written about Shakespeare, which, perhaps, you might like to possess.

"You will have heard that the new edition of Dryden moves very fairly, and that our friend Swift is nearly, if not entirely, out of the market. I think I mentioned to you the plan I had of publishing the biographical memoirs of Dryden and Swift together, detached from the respective works. There are many who possess former editions of Dryden and Swift who would readily buy your biographical accounts of them, if to be had in a detached form. It would not only answer my purpose, but be received by the public with kindness; at least such are my own feelings. We have already printed 1000 copies of Dryden's Life, and I hope shall by and bye have a similar extra number of the Life of Swift.

"In my seclusion from the bustle of the world, anxious as I have been to separate my mind from worldly cares —those at least created by myself—I have found it very difficult to do so, and I daresay I have planned as many books as would be quite sufficient business for years to come. I have committed most of the plans to writing, and whether Providence may spare my own life to see any of them accomplished, I hope, for the sake of literature, and those to come after me in the profession, they may all one day or other be acted upon, and to this extent only do my anxieties reach. In the course of such cogitations, it occurred to me that perhaps you might not be unwilling to see six or seven handsome octavo volumes

published of your own miscellaneous prose writings, with some such title as this—'The Miscellaneous Works in Prose of Sir Walter Scott, Bart.' Of course I mean only such as are the property of my own house, and such other of your fugitive writings as you would be disposed to sanction with your name. Such a work will be done some day or other, but never so properly as under your own eye. With your leave I shall now mention what, in my opinion, such a collection might consist of:—

1. Life of Dryden.
2. Life of Swift.
3. Account of Anna Seward.
   Account of Sir Ralph Sadler.
   Account of the Earl of Peterborough (from Carleton's Memoirs).
   Character of Lord Melville.
   Character of Henry, Duke of Buccleugh, and his son (the last Duke). This distinguished person was a man of higher talent than the world knew. You read to me some years ago a letter to yourself from his Grace, on the subject of the Laureateship, which made an impression upon my mind that I shall never forget.[1] Lord Hutchinson's from Egypt on the death of Sir Ralph Abercromby, Lord Collingwood's on the death of Nelson, and the Earl of Hopetoun's from Corunna, after the unfortunate fate of General Moore, do not surpass it; and, to my taste, they are the finest specimens of letter-writing of modern times.
4. The articles Chivalry and The Drama, in the Supplement to the Encyclopædia. Introduction to the Castle of Otranto.
5. Paul's Letters. Some additions would be wanted to this volume, which you yourself can best suggest.
6. Historical part of the Edinburgh Annual Register, 1814-15.
7. Introduction to the Border Antiquities. There would be other matter wanted to fill up this, which, I dare say, you can supply. I would not propose printing anything from either of the Reviews.

[1] See Life, vol. iii. p. 79.

"The sale of such a collection as this would be quite certain, and the book, I think, might be edited without much trouble, and whatever portion does not already belong to my house, we should gladly and handsomely pay for. The volumes as to size should be similar to Dryden's Life; and in order to make Swift less bulky than at present, the printing must be differently arranged—it being a much thicker volume than the Life of Dryden. The above is a very imperfect list, no doubt, but I have no books nor anything to assist my memory in making it less so; and I hope I have not fathered upon you any of the works of others.

"The weather is now getting fine, and I endeavour to be out of doors as much as I possibly can, and within doors am surrounded with every domestic blessing. I lead, however, a solitary enough life, compared to former days. I cannot say that my old acquaintances are troublesome to me, and it is fortunate I have no desire it should be otherwise. I have a musical friend, a physician, who comes occasionally, though not professionally, to pay me a visit; he composes, sings, and plays delightfully. Doctor Kitchiner's name, I dare say, may be known to you; he is the author of a universally interesting work, The Cook's Oracle, and of a very useful and amusing little volume, entitled The Art of Prolonging Life, of which last allow me to advise you to get a copy. He is nearly as great an enthusiast about music as I ever met with—about anything. He has been talking to me about having all the songs in your Poetical Works set to music, which he offers to undertake; it would make a volume equal at

least to one of those published by Mr. George Thomson. Many of the songs have had a great sale separately, and I don't see why the whole might not be published in the manner Dr. Kitchiner has suggested. I would come under no engagement in the matter, nor shall I give it much of my consideration till I have an opportunity of being favoured with your opinion, and of course approbation, of such a work. I enclose you a specimen of the Doctor's doings in this way, the song of 'Love wakes and weeps,'[1] which he sent to my daughter the other day. He has also his eye to the songs in the Novels and Tales, etc., of the Author of Waverley, but I told him, what you and I know to be quite true, that there is difficulty in having access to that distinguished individual; and I held out no hope to him that I could at all reach the fountainhead, where alone liberty could be obtained for such an undertaking.

"I have still further matters about which I should like to write to you, but the present will be a sufficient *infliction* for one despatch; and to conclude, permit me now to assure you that I continue with the utmost respect, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

Although I find the two preceding letters *in extenso*, as I have printed them, among the copies in my possession of my father's letters to Sir Walter, I am inclined to think, from the close neighbourhood of their dates, that one letter only had been despatched, in which the substance of both had been embodied. Sir Walter's letter, dated Edinburgh, February 25, 1822, strengthens this conviction, but before

[1] From The Pirate.

quoting it, I shall give the one to which he alludes in the beginning of it:—

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"EDINBURGH, 16*th Feb.* 1822.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have been long thinking of writing to you, but was afraid of my letter being an intrusion; for, though I know you would not think any communication from me could be so while in a tolerable state of health, yet sometimes the correspondence which one values most may be inconvenient in a time of indisposition. You remember when you brought a physician to see me in 1819 or 1820, and I should have felt working or dictating a letter a dreadful task at that moment, although it has pleased God I am now as well as a man who feels himself on the other side of the hill can pretend to be. I wish, my valued and very old friend, that I could bring you any man of art who could put you on your alert again. But I do not believe these gentlemen can do much for us beyond a certain point; but when they have regulated our body to the best of their skill, our spirit and courage can do much for us afterwards. I remember when I was totally unable to walk without assistance, I insisted upon being lifted on my pony, with one man to lead it and another to hold me on, and in that helpless state recovered my usual habits of the open air and free exercise. And day after day I lay on the sofa at Huntly Burn for half-an-hour, scarce able to speak a word, and then was escorted back to Abbotsford in the same doleful condition. So cheer up your heart, my good old friend; there are moments when

our constitution takes an uncertain, changeable sort of wavering, but if attended to it settles. We fine, and renew our lease of life, if not quite on the same terms as in our youth, yet on those which are well worth having, though not quite so advantageous. I remember keeping my spirits afloat when I saw all around me despairing,—even to Maida my wolf-dog, who howled most detestably, and my piper, who assisted in laying me in the bath when I was very bad indeed,—and chiefly by means of an old ballad of Robin Hood, in which, when in extreme peril, the hero is made to say,

> 'O blessed Virgin, quoth Robin Hood,
> That art both Mother and May,
> I think it was never man's destiny
> To die before his day.'

So keep up your heart, and we shall have a bottle of good claret betwixt us yet, and many an old-fashioned Scotch tale and story, such as would have pleased Oldbuck of Monkbarns. We have lost 'jocund Johnnie,' to be sure, but we have enough of old recollections of times before our day, and in the earlier part of our own time, when we were both struggling to emancipate ourselves from obscurity, to make the chimney-nook a merry one in which we shall have our next social meeting.

"Concerning business, our more important affairs go on as you would wish. I have been a loser by missing your liberal proposal of continuing the Novel business, but I readily consented to continue the communication of the Lives for a certain time, at no other expense than £50 or £60 for three years to Mrs. John Ballantyne, whose income

will be limited till Trinity be sold. I do not part with the copyright, however, which I reckon valuable; of course I declined any treaty with Hurst's people until I learned whether you would either pursue the old plan or take this new plan. I told Mr. Cadell how much I should be hurt at the idea of anything passing which you wished to be concerned in—and indeed had planned, and which I was to have the management of, without your being fully sensible that it was wholly in your offer. I am sensible at the same time of the force of the reasons which he alleged for not immediately taking the interest in it which you originally proffered. It is so much the worse for me, as I shall now do gratuitously, or nearly so, what you proffered me handsome payment for; but that is no great matter, for I think the copyrights of the Lives of Novelists, by the author of W—y, with critical remarks, will be a valuable property of itself some time or other. I should do Mr. Cadell great injustice if I did not say he conducted himself in every respect towards me as you would wish him to do were you present, and that I have every reason, which I know you would wish me to have, to be satisfied with the firm of Constable and Co.

"James Ballantyne brought me pleasant news of your health, and the assurance of your kindness towards me in two books—the one of which, being the most beautiful manuscript I ever saw in my life, I intend generously to bestow on my wife—and the other, being a *nut* for my own cracking, I reserve for my own very small selection of R. R. R. Nothing delights me so much as such a narration as Master Wenlocke's, which lets you at once

into all the minute and domestic concerns of a period so interesting. So, many thanks to you for both, and your continued regard.

"I have little to tell you of Edinburgh news. You would, I know, sympathize with my great pleasure at my friend Will Erskine's promotion to the Bench. My own family is all well: Charles studying in Wales, Walter following out the great art of war at Berlin. Allan has made one of the finest pictures of the young lieutenant you ever saw,—full length, in uniform, and holding his jennet. I mean it for the only picture in my library. I shall not be in London this year. The last was expensive both in the actual outlay of money, and still more in interfering with the means of making it; but I could not help either, so must work the harder this year, which, thank God, I have both inclination and health to do.

"I cannot help wishing your house Lockhart's Quixote. The notes are most curious, and I think it cannot but supersede every other; besides, he will *blaze* one day; of that, if God spare him, there is little doubt. It is good to have an early interest in a rising author.

"I hope you get on well with your proposed Catalogue of your own rare volumes, and that you are adding to it all the anecdotes which your ever powerful memory and early and constant inquiry into these subjects enable you to throw together. In doing so you will add a valuable treasure to the bibliography of Scotland.

"I intended to write but a few lines, and behold the fifth page encroached upon! It will serve, however, with my best wishes to Mrs. Constable and family, to show

that I always am, my very good and old friend, yours faithfully and sincerely, WALTER SCOTT."

THE SAME to THE SAME.

"EDINBURGH, *25th February* 1822.

"MY GOOD FRIEND,—You will find our letters have crossed each other. I told you some particulars of what we were about here in my last, and I learn from yours with pleasure that your health is improving. We cannot grow young again, but we may be good stout old carles for all that. Your Castlebeare Park has a grand sound about it. I am sorry I shall not see you in it; but London had too much of my time last year, and in truth is fit for nothing but spending money. My last acquainted you of what was done in the matter of the Novels. The sketches [biographical notices] will be of value should we ever think of the Prose Works, as I retain my interest in them, unless when united to the text of the Novels. It is a sacrifice on my own part, but it puts all John's affairs easy, and gives his widow an assurance of competency, time to sell Trinity to advantage, and so on.

"A Shakespeare, to say truth, has been often a favourite scheme with me; a sensible Shakespeare, in which the useful and readable notes should be condensed and separated from the trash; but it would require much time, and, I fear, more patience than I may ever be able to command. Then, when the world sees it, they would certainly be disappointed, for of a name of notoriety they would expect something new on a subject where there is nothing new to be said; and when they found it was only

a selection and condensation of the labours of former editors, they would be apt to conceive themselves imposed upon. Yet, so long ago as when John Ballantyne was in Hanover Street, I did think seriously of such a thing, and I still think it a desideratum in English literature.

"Whenever you wish Swift to go to press I am in great preparation. I have added a good deal to the correspondence, and made many additions to and some corrections in the Life. I have also almost completed the new arrangement, which you may remember you recommended; so all that matter waits only the public demand and your sanction.

"I should like the plan of the Prose Works well, though some are slovenly written, and would require correction; but then the letters from abroad should come first. I think of them often, and am not much shocked to see so many things of the kind published. The fashion will be over in a short time, and then such a work as Paul's Letters will have the merit of novelty. You remember much more than I do of my prosaics. John Ballantyne could have added much to the list, and I believe had a collection of them which I shall try to recover. They are almost all your own property, I think. Lockhart will lose his joke if such a collection should appear, for at present he tells Sophia that if her father is the greater *poet*, his own is the more complete *proser*. . . .

"The letters of the Duke of Lennox are interesting; they show him to be a just and fair man, I think, and the little details which they contain are valuable at such a distance of time. I perceive he mentions his beautiful

Castle of Inchmurrin on Loch Lomond, and that he seems to have intended to buy Kilmaronock, near Buckhaven, which fell afterwards into the possession of the Cochranes.

"Your old tact does not deceive you. In good hands Pocahontas would make a capital story, but it must be written by some one who knows American and Indian manners more familiarly than can be acquired from books. It might be united with the story of Whalley the regicide, who appeared suddenly (being then in hiding) when a certain village was attacked by the Indians, rallied the Europeans, fought like a stout old Roundhead as he was, beat off the enemy, and was never seen again. I think Washington Irving could make something out of this. As for Pocahontas, I have some idea of a passage in Ben Jonson describing her as frequenting 'the womb of tavern.' I hope the good princess's morals were not corrupted by her residence in Wapping.

"Margaret Hartsyde, I think, *condiddled*, as poor Hunter called it, a parcel of jewels belonging to Anne of Denmark, who nevertheless appears from the letter to Kilsythe to have looked out pretty sharp after her valuables. I think Margaret came to shame on that account. I will get at the Apophthegms, etc., and will soon send some to entertain you. You will do me great pleasure to tell me your ideas from time to time, and it may pass over an anxious time now and then; and pray continue to use Miss Constable as your amanuensis, who, I daresay, is as well qualified by her prudence as by her very pretty distinct handwriting. Ours are not the sorts of secrets young ladies are interested in; but I am sure Miss Constable

will think them equally sacred. I should have been long since finished with what we are now doing, but the removal of David Hume, with a sharp fit of the gout on the part of Sir Robert Dundas, have for the time thrown some fag on me, as one brother of the clerk's table is absent, and the other a novice. In fact, I cannot work well after I have had four or five hours of the Court, for though the business is trifling, yet it requires constant attention, which is at length exhausting.

"I am turning my thoughts to that tumultuary, agitated period of Charles II.'s reign which was disturbed by the Popish Plot. Let me know what you think about it. There are many *narratives* in the Advocates' Library, and I have several myself. It will do you good to think on what we are about here, if you do not think too keenly. I am always happy to hear from you, and particularly instructed by your bibliographical and antiquarian information. 'Buff—buff—buff,' you shall see in print by and bye.

"By the way, did you ever see such vulgar trash as certain imitators wish to pass on the world for Scotch? It makes me think myself in company with Lothian coal-carters; and yet Scotch was a language which we have heard spoken by the learned, and the wise and witty, and the accomplished, and which had not a trace of vulgarity in it, but on the contrary sounded rather graceful and genteel. You remember how well Mrs. Murray Keith, the late Lady Dumfries, my poor mother, and other ladies of that day, spoke their native language. It was different from English, as the Venetian is from the Tuscan dialect

of Italy; but it never occurred to any one that the Scotch, any more than the Venetian, were more vulgar than those who spoke the purer and more classical.

"But that is all gone, and the remembrance will be drowned with us the elders of this existing generation, and our Edinburgh—I can no longer say our Scottish—gentry will, with some study, speak rather a worse dialect than the Newcastle and Sheffield riders. So glides this world away. When you wish to write, Fulney or Croker will frank your packets, but do not write oftener than you find it an amusement.—Always yours very truly,

"WALTER SCOTT.

"Everything respecting copyrights, etc., has been settled just as you and I would have wished it. On the 12th I shall be at Abbotsford."

CHAPTER IX.

Edition of British Novelists undertaken by Messrs. Hurst, Robinson, and Co. —Letter from Sir Walter Scott on the subject, with reply of the Publishers —Letter from my father, with Sir Walter's reply—Peveril of the Peak —Hesitation as to extending the work to four volumes—Letter from Mr. Constable suggesting sources of information regarding the period of Charles II.—Tract on Quakerism.

THE plan of a new edition of the British Novelists does not appear to have been approved of by Mr. Cadell, and was abandoned by A. Constable and Co.; but by the following extract from a letter of this period, addressed to my father by Mr. Robinson, the London agent of the house, and subsequent correspondence with Sir Walter on the subject, it seems to have found favour with Hurst, Robinson, and Co. Mr. Robinson says:—"Nothing is so clear as that the Author of Waverley should hold his hand for a year or two; but this I fancy can't be attempted without great danger that he might be induced to offer some new work to Murray or Longman. However, it is a fact that the first volume is actually printed of the new work, at all events James Ballantyne asserts this to be the case. James had in view by coming to London a new press to work by steam, and, secondly, to sell the Ballantyne's Novelists and Don Quixote. When I named to him that I had no doubt he could arrange this matter with your firm and ours, he said the great man would he

believed continue the Lives gratis on our taking Ballantyne's Novelists and the Quixote. 'Then,' said I, 'you *need go no farther to seek a market,*' and thus the matter ended." In a letter three days later Robinson says, "James has written to head-quarters, and will hand a reply on Monday or Tuesday; but I fear the great man will not undertake to complete the Novels as a consideration for getting John's estate rid of the Novelists and the Quixote."

The two following letters relate to a contract subsequently entered into between Sir Walter Scott and Messrs. Hurst, Robinson and Co:—

"To Messrs. Hurst, Robinson, and Co., booksellers, London.

"EDIN., *25th February* [1822].

"GENTLEMEN,—I desired our mutual friend Mr. James Ballantyne to write to you some time ago, concerning the plan of the series of Novels which I have undertaken to furnish with something like biographical notices and critical prefaces. It appears to me of very great consequence to have something like a distinct plan before us, that we may be gradually collecting the necessary materials for making the work respectable, and the introductory matter as interesting as its brevity will permit. With this view I should like to have your ideas of the works to be included; those already printed in the double columns you would, I suppose, reprint—only I would leave out the Jonathan Wild of Fielding, which is rather a moral satire than a novel. Having printed Smollett and Fielding, Richardson undoubtedly comes next in

order. But then his works are so insufferably long, that they will take a great deal of room in the proposed edition—while, on the other hand, a collection of novels without Richardson would be very incomplete. What are you to say of Defoe? Robinson Crusoe you must have, I fancy, and the Memoirs of a Cavalier; but Colonel Jack and Moll Flanders will not bear introduction into modern society. If you add Sterne, Mackenzie, and the Adventures of a Guinea, with perhaps one or two others, it will complete the earlier series of the novelists of Great Britain. When you come to the more recent times I fear you will be embarrassed with copyrights—for instance, in the case of Madame D'Arblay, of Charlotte Smith, of Clara Reeve, of the author of Mount Kennett, of White, author of Cœur de Lion, and two or three other novels of a singular cast; of the American Brown, of Holcroft, of Godwin, of Anne Radcliffe. These, with one or two of Mrs. Bennett's, and some that may have escaped my memory, I recommend to your attention, for the purpose of considering whether you have the power of publishing them, and having it, whether you ought to avail yourselves of it, and to what extent. I should like to have a catalogue or two of a good circulating library, if ten years old so much the better, to refresh my memory concerning these works of fiction.

"When the general contents of the work are settled, it will be necessary to get as many original and early editions as possible to insure correctness in the reprint, and also that you endeavour to glean among your literary friends and the gentlemen of the trade, such anecdotes

concerning authors and publications as are still afloat among the book-selling and book-buying world; the old magazines and obituaries should also be searched, to discover any particulars which they may contain respecting the deceased authors; for this I must look to some help from your great town, where there are so many opportunities of picking up literary intelligence. There might be a separate and third series of novels from the French and German, which would be an interesting addition; but you will probably [think] there is enough of work cut out already.

"That this undertaking should be profitable to you will arise much from the manner in which it is executed, and it is evident we must begin in good time to collect materials, which it may not be very easy to find; you might also, perhaps, think it worth your while to consider whether, in cases where the copyright is not out but nearly so, it might not be worth your while to make arrangements with the proprietors, which of course will be best done by taking steps to the purpose betimes. I am about to finish a sketch of Cervantes and Le Sage, for the 4th vol. of John Ballantyne's collection. I am very desirous to have the Spanish book called *El Diabolo Cojuelo,* said to be the original of the *Diable Boiteux* of the last-named author.—I am, Gentlemen, your obedient servant, WALTER SCOTT.

"John Ballantyne had, I believe, made considerable collections for continuing his work: these should be purchased at the sale of his books. I have not seen a cata-

logue, but when I do I will point out to you what I think essential."

To this letter Messrs. Hurst, Robinson, and Co. sent the following reply. What success attended the undertaking I have no means of knowing. Mr. Lockhart says, "The Ballantyne Library crept on to the tenth volume, and was then dropt abruptly." The tenth volume was published in 1825.

"LONDON, *March* 1, 1822.

"SIR,—We feel greatly honoured by your early attention to our interest in reference to the contract we made through our mutual friend Mr. James Ballantyne, and in reply to your much esteemed favour we beg to say that we are entirely of your opinion as to what should be the contents of the Novelist's Library. We certainly propose to reprint what is already printed in double columns, leaving out Jonathan Wild. We exactly think with you as to Richardson, that his works are insufferably long, and yet he cannot be wholly omitted; we therefore propose to print only Clarissa; Defoe's Robinson Crusoe and Memoirs of a Cavalier will be sufficient; Sterne and Mackenzie would come in very properly. The Memoirs of Sterne would be particularly interesting. With regard to more recent times, we certainly propose to include all you name, provided we can make arrangements respecting such as be copyright, and this shall be attended to without delay. However, we can now decide as to Mrs. Radcliffe and the American Brown—they are certainly not copyrights, and we shall be able to furnish you with some materials for the biographical notice of Mrs. Radcliffe.

"The French and German authors would very properly form a third series; but perhaps our plan is already sufficiently extensive, yet they may be included in some future arrangement.

"As to the general contents of the work no one is so competent to decide as yourself; but since you have condescended to allow us to state our opinion, we will instantly give the matter due consideration, and furnish you with a list of the proposed works in the course of a few days. At the same time, we must beg to remark that we shall leave the matter entirely to yourself. We will constantly collect all the oldest and best editions of the several authors, and they shall be duly forwarded to you; and as to anecdotes, etc., concerning the different authors, they shall be collected without any regard to expense, and with great industry, and these materials shall be put into your hands with all possible despatch. We will most readily purchase whatever may be found in our late friend John Ballantyne's collection that you think any way useful, and we are now anxious to see the catalogue marked by you, in order that we may not purchase duplicates.

"On the 2d inst. we forward a mail-parcel to Messrs. Constable and Co., in which we enclose you the Spanish work you requested to have, and in the same packet various catalogues of extensive collections of novels.

"Our excellent friend Constable has been three hours with us this day in Cheapside, in as full health as we ever recollect to have seen him.—We are, Sir, your obliged and obedient servants, HURST, ROBINSON, AND CO.

"To Sir Walter Scott, Bart."

On the 9th of March my father writes to Sir Walter from Castlebeare Park, as follows:—

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—It is hardly fair in me to offer myself thus frequently to your notice, and particularly to think of engaging any portion of your time with my letters immediately on your arrival in the country; but you will make some allowance for me, as an idle man, in my present secluded condition. I can only, however, in return, expect to hear from you very briefly.

"I need not again repeat anything as to the indifferent state of my health; but although I have not been for many months able to encounter much bodily fatigue, yet, thank God, the energies of my mind have remained entire, as the employment of Mr. Ballantyne's presses will now, and for a year to come, I hope, very amply testify. I have thus been attending to some business of both an agreeable and productive kind. It has always been my pride to acknowledge the success of the works which the partial kindness of my friends may have put into my hands from time to time; and I am not aware that you are not now, as formerly, equally entitled to such acknowledgments, however frequently they may be repeated.

"It occurred to me some months ago that there was a large class of readers who might desire to possess a uniform edition in a small size, beautifully printed, of the Novels, Tales, and Romances of the Author of Waverley, and I found no difficulty in the disposal of 5000 copies of that work, a transaction of which you may perhaps have heard. I also arranged for a similar impression of your Poetical Works, of which, since we acquired the shares of the Lady

of the Lake, etc., in Feby. 1819, there have been three editions printed. The 12-vol. edition is entirely sold off. The octavo edition in 10 vols. is nearly gone, and the edition in 8 vols., which has just appeared, is selling to a wish; but this last should have had vignette title-pages. The number printed of these three editions within three years amounts to fully 5000, and has excited a fresh demand from purchasers. It may be a literary anecdote not unworthy of record, that I had some difficulty in convincing a firm, whose interest in some of the pieces amounts to about a fourth of the whole in number of sheets, that such success would attend the Poems in their new shape. Indeed, they threw such obstacles in the way, that in order to carry my plan into execution smoothly,—a mode of proceeding which I believe in the long-run generally turns out best,—we purchased to the amount of some hundred pounds of their stock of the separate poems, the sale of which they alleged would suffer; in other words, I had to pay them for increasing the value of their property.

"Considering the other large doings of my house in paper and print, 5000 copies of these works would at first sight appear a large undertaking, but I obviated this by getting Messrs. Hurst, Robinson, and Co., the purchasers, to supply the paper, which will greatly ease and simplify the transaction to my house, and, I may perhaps with some justice add, upon the whole is perhaps of a nature new in the annals of bookselling. The profits, you may believe, will amount to a very respectable sum, which we shall receive at long dates, no doubt, but unclogged with outlays or other expenses.

"There is at present a very considerable stock of the original editions of the Novels, Tales, and Romances in the detached form in hand; but we are sending them into the market, and shall make *a good hole in the bink* previously to the editions of which I am now speaking being made public. There are three or four classes of purchasers, perhaps a greater number, for these very popular productions; and I think I have now contrived the means of gratifying and supplying them all. Indeed, if studying (if a bookseller, who it has been said does not read books, can presume to use such an expression) how all this is to be done is likely to produce any favourable result, I may mention that I permit myself to think of very little other business. I regret that more of my advice had not been resorted to in regard to the British Novel-Writers and Don Quixote, but I intend this subject to form a separate letter ere long.

"I must now come to the concluding object of the present one—which is to ask your approbation of a publication, of which I now take the liberty of sending you a specimen, The Poetry of the Novels, Tales, and Romances of the Author of Waverley—which abound with so many beautiful fragments and pieces of poetry, and of which I propose printing a small impression, something on the plan of the enclosed, which contains the poetry of the first volume of Waverley. Preparing the copy for the press would be a delightful amusement to me, and I shall take care that the whole be accurately printed. If there should be a demand for the work in this collected form, which I flatter myself there would be, the future editions

would of course be printed in Edinburgh. I am anxious to superintend this little affair, but I could not think of proceeding without your approval. The short notices in prose would, I fancy, be quite necessary, and I should exercise my best judgment in selecting them. I propose engraving the view of Edinburgh, formerly done from Mr. Thomson's picture, as a vignette for the title-page. I really do not know what you will say to me about all these projects of mine.

"Our friend Mr. Jeffrey has frequently said in joke, when I have inquired how it happened he had not reviewed *this* book and *that* book, 'Constable, why don't you review it yourself?' My reply generally was, 'Why, *only* because I have not time.' At present I am differently circumstanced, and hence my presumption as an editor.

"I shall wait the favour of your reply with some anxiety, and I am, with the utmost respect, etc.,

"ARCHD. CONSTABLE."

Sir Walter's reply was as follows:—

"*March* 23*d*, 1822.

"DEAR SIR,—Though I have time but for a brief letter, I do not put off much time in assuring you that you have my entire approbation, were that of any consequence, in the publication you intend to form from the prose vols. It is odd to say, but nevertheless it is quite certain, that I do not know whether some of the things are original or not, and I wish you would devise some way of stating this in the title. 'The Author of Waverley, finding it incon-

venient to look over books for a motto, generally made one without much scrupling whether it was positively and absolutely his own, or botched up out of pieces and fragments of poetry floating in his memory;' but that would have an awkward effect if he were supposed to found merit on them as original. What I know I will point out on the sheet sent, which I now return under Mr. Fulney's cover, and which will save much reference.

"Mr. Cadell, who I understand is to visit you soon, will tell you how we get on here, and show you symptoms of our progress. I have nearly finished—*i.e.* within half a volume, but your 12,000 are heavy at press. I think some part of the affair is in your way. I need not beg the utmost prudence, as review before publication is generally the hardest blow that a reviewer can deal, but they cannot deal very hard ones after all, when a man, like Cromwell's Saints, gets above criticism.

"I am building away here, a little expensively doubtless, but my family are provided for, and since the world and you have saddled me with fortune I may as well enjoy part of it myself.

"They talk of a farmer making two blades of grass grow where one grew before, but you, my good friend, have made a dozen volumes where probably but one would have existed; for the love of fame is soon satiated; and besides, a man who is fond of it turns timid and afraid of indulging it; but I should like to see who is insensible to the solid comfort of £8000 a year, especially if he buys land, builds, and improves. To be sure, this depends on the caprice of public taste, but while it lasts

it lasts. And now I have got my legs again, I have no great fear of a speedy failure. I am very glad you think of being down in Scotland when your health will permit. I have to consult you about arranging my library, and twenty things besides. I admire how you moved off your stock. You certainly have the knack, as Captain Macheath's song, so fatal to Deacon Brodie, has it, of turning all your lead to gold. You know my way of thinking of these matters: I never wish to make a bargain by which the bookseller shall not have his full share of the advantage, because the talent of writing and the power of selling books are two very different things; and as it is difficult or impossible to cram a bad book down the throats of the public, so there are many of the trade in whose hands a good one is perfectly stationary. Last time I was in London I wanted a curious, amusing, little publication upon Cranbourne Chase, written by an old hunting, shooting parson, and an excellent specimen of what may be called the rigmarole style of composition. I found it at a premium of 15 per cent. in some of the retail shops, and thought it as well to try the publisher, who took the trouble to make up a copy out of 200 lying condemned in his warehouse.

"Adieu, my dear sir; I am too busy writing *for* you to write long letters *to* you; but to hear from you will always be particularly acceptable.

"How does the Catalogue get on? My son Walter is at Berlin. He is lieutenant on the half-pay of the 15th. The Duke of Cumberland is colonel—and he first laid his commands on him to procure him, *without delay*, a com-

plete set of the Poems, Tales, etc., which Mr. Cadell's kindness has immediately furnished; but, secondly, he sent his own tailor to furnish Walter with a complete set of the 15th's expensive uniform, though Walter had all his hussar accoutrements of the 18th, his late regiment, entirely new; and though it might have been supposed a little inconvenient to a Scotch gentleman to equip his son twice a year in these expensive rattletraps. But we must not sit at Rome and strive with the Pope. He wanted to send him to Hanover also; and it is a little hard on an old Jacobite cavalier to be plagued with Cumberland and Hanover at this time of day; however, it is all meant for kindness and civility, and I suppose must be received as such. I beg my kind compliments to Mrs. and Miss Constable, and I am always your sincere friend and faithful servant, WALTER SCOTT.

"It is blowing, as they say, great guns: a queer season —neither frost nor snow. We just caught twenty-four hours of the latter (?) to fill our ice-house. At present the very house is rocking with the fury of the blast."

The next letter—from my father to Sir Walter—is entirely devoted to the indication of works which he believed might be useful in the composition of Peveril of the Peak; but before the publication of that novel, which extended to four volumes in post octavo,[1] and appeared in January

[1] On the 2d November 1822, Mr. Cadell wrote to my father—"I only this moment have heard from Joseph that you were home early to-day; had I known it I would have sent out James Ballantyne, who was here twice, partly to ask for you, and mainly to state the tenor of a conversation he had this morning with Sir Walter. It is to the pur-

1823, considerable progress had been made in the writing of its successor, Quentin Durward.

"CASTLEBEARE PARK, 24*th March* 1822.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I have been lately thinking of the period of Charles the Second, and if my private collection of books had been at my command, I might probably have had it in my power to mention and point out some curious enough matters relative to that reign. What I have now to communicate, I fear can only be considered as very unimportant.

"PERIOD OF CHARLES II.

Lord Grey's History of the Ryehouse Plot, a thin 8vo vol., is a curious and authentic work.

The collections in the Advocates' Library of this period are abundant; most of them are referred to by Mr. Laing in the History of Scotland.

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pose, I regret to say, of still making Peveril four vols. The fact is simply, Sir Walter now feels that the third vol. is so much superior to the two first, and in three vols. it must end so soon and close so hurriedly, that he seems at least resolved to push into a fourth; this is, as near as I can give you, Ballantyne's words. Sir Walter concluded by saying, 'If it is not too late for the bookseller, it is not too late for me. I shall speak to Mr. Constable regarding it.' As you went away walking lame to-day, and may not be here to-morrow, I think it better to state to you at once I say *regret* from the fear, nay the certainty, of not seeing the book this year, and thus putting my financial matters in some degree in a rueful state; it is on this score only that I use the word regret. I have read the book as far as the tenth sheet of vol. iii., and this I must say frankly, the third volume is that part of the book that will least do to be stopped, and one volume more of the time of Charles must make the whole book *a good book; this is his own opinion.* Mr. Lockhart also said so to James Ballantyne some days ago, and asked if it could be made four vols. Mr. Ballantyne said then it could not, but after what Sir Walter said this morning, he came hot-foot to speak on the point.

"Taking everything into view, I shall not hesitate one moment, if

Lord Fountainhall's MSS. contain many remarkable matters. Mr. Thomson has a very good transcript of them, I believe.

In Dr. Drake's Winter Nights there is a series of articles on Charles II., his manners and times, etc.

The Chronicle of Fife. This work contains many particulars of King Charles's journey through that part of the country. When in Cupar, he got his 'foure houres' in the Tolbooth, during which he was entertained with a '*Music Sang*' by Mr. Andro Anderson, the then schoolmaster of the borough. Anderson was afterwards minister of Perth, and from him is descended Mr. Anderson of St. Germains, etc.

There is a curious MS. preserved, at least it existed twenty years ago, 'The Dyet Buik' of the King in his progress through Scotland, containing a list of all he ate and drank, whether paid for or in presents, as well as when and where. There are many curious items to be gleaned from this MS., which belonged to Mr. Watson of Saughton, and I think there are some extracts from it in the *Edinburgh Magazine* about the year 1794 or 95. Mr. John Wood knows about this MS.

Sir Walter comes in my way, to state that the Author of Waverley must have his own way. If he is in the vein, he cannot be stopped with any propriety. One thing I am feeling is, that we should *instantly* write to Sir Walter, and *let him take his own way;* only ask, if possible, to push it out this year. James Ballantyne thought it might be got out in December. The last sheet I saw he was in the harem of Charles II. If he goes on as it is there, he cannot for his life do better than write on, in place of closing at present.

"If he calls to-morrow, and you should not be here, I shall tell him plumply my own opinion, and say, Go on by all means as you are now doing. I am aware four vols. is rather much, but the first Tales of My Landlord were four vols. A good book in four vols. must and will be far before a bad one in three; as to there being four bad, this is now out of the question."

My father replied as follows:—"The author must be the fittest to determine, at this stage of the undertaking, whether it ought to conclude with the third volume or be extended to four. You are aware of my ideas as to the chances of a £2, 2s. romance, *particularly* in the present times; on the other hand, if the three vols. be indifferent, a good fourth vol. might save the whole. It must be decided by the author, who is the best judge of what he has done and intends doing for the story."

There is a very scarce tract in 4to, 'The King's Concealment at Trent,' by Anne Windham, printed at London in 1667. It is in the form of a narrative, and will be worth looking into by any one much interested in the minutiæ of that period, when, I presume, female writers were rather uncommon. There are many publications under the title of Boscobel, and Urquhart's Jewel; that very singular volume you must of course have.

Gumble's Life of Monk is very authentic; his account of the siege of Dundee, if I remember right, is curious.

I possess an original MS. Journal of Thomas Baker, Esq., resident at Tripoli, from 1677 to 1685, which contains many curious things relative to the treatment of the English slaves in Barbary at that period, and some singular illustrations of manners, I believe—but of this I am not quite sure; there was a Roundhead or two rescued by Baker from the Dey's clutches.

The records of the Privy Council of Scotland are very entire as to this period, containing much about the trial of witches, etc.

The works of Barclay of Urie, the Quaker, might be worth looking into; they are contained in a folio volume. Your ancestor, the Laird of Swinton, turned Quaker, and, I believe, was *condiddled* of his estate by the Duke of Lauderdale, who had rather a knack at that sort of thing.

The Earl of Rochester's character of Charles the Second was—'The courage of his grandfather, the resolution of his father, the chastity of his mother, and the religion of his brother.'

It is quite unnecessary to mention Grammont, and many other works of that period, or the astrological publications, which are as numerous as they are absurd. Witchcraft and Quakerism would contrast admirably.

The original MS. of Sir James Turner's memoirs is now in your hands, I believe.

The Mystery and Method of his Majesties Happy Restoration, by John Price, D.D., one of Monk's chaplains, is in the form of a narrative. Price was in Scotland with Monk in the course of their progress through Britain. He gives the following account of a sermon by the famous Hugh Peters in the church of St. Albans:—'As for his sermon (allowing for the canting of his expressions) he managed it with some dexterity at the first; his text was Psalm cvii. 7,—"He led them forth by the right way, that they might go to the city where they dwelt." With his finger on the cushion, he measured the right way from the Red

Sea through the Wilderness to Canaan; told us it was not forty days' march, but God led Israel forty years through the Wilderness before they came thither; yet this was still the Lord's right way, who led His people Cunkledom cum Crankledom.' The book is printed at London, in 1680, 12mo.

In the year 1798 I sold a MS. in quarto, which I had purchased in Aberdeen, to the Advocates' Library, 'A Collection of Miscellaneous and Historical Poems,' chiefly relating to public transactions from the year 1652 to 1666, and seemingly collected by a person resident in Scotland.—The principal contributors or authors in this work were S. Colvil, Jas. Berry, John Lawson, Jos. Cooke, R. Innes, Lady Reay, and W. Dugard. Many of the poems relate to Scotland; one poem in particular, of some length, entitled 'The Character of Orknay,' but has no author's name. The conclusion, or date, as follows, is singular, 'From my cave, called the Otter's Hole, in the third month of my banishment from Christendome, Septr. 9, 1652.' I have frequently asked for this manuscript at the Library, but never could obtain a sight of it.

"I regret I have nothing of more importance to mention to you, particularly of this side of the Tweed, which is of far greater interest in the present day than what relates to Scotland, about which there has already been so much said and printed. I believe I communicated formerly something relative to the period of Monmouth's rebellion, and as this is quite a letter of desultory matter, I must ask whether I had some years ago the pleasure of giving you an impression of a print but little known—'An inside view of the Abbey Church of Holyrood House,' as fitted up when James Duke of York was in Scotland? It is a folio sheet, and was engraved at the expense of Robert Adam the architect some seventy years ago. I hope when his Majesty visits Scotland he will order this ancient edifice to be renovated. I forget

whether it is one of the objects pointed out by Sir John Sinclair in his celebrated letter for the King's attention in the northern capital, but I sincerely hope it may not be overlooked. Sir John Sinclair has been a most useful man, though he has occasionally printed absurdities. His letter on the subject of entertaining the King I should rank as a first-rate literary curiosity; indeed, as such I have preserved a copy of it.

"If anything further comes in my way relative to the period of Charles II., I may take the liberty of again writing to you. In the meantime I feel most sensibly that the present is of little value, though perhaps it may point out some trifles which otherwise might have escaped your notice; and I am, with the utmost respect, etc.

"A. C."

"CASTLEBEARE PARK, 27*th March* 1822.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I am much gratified and obliged by your kind letter of the 23d, and I now enclose you a title-page, altered, I think, in a manner to meet your wishes. I also take the liberty of annexing to this a few lines, which, with a little dressing up, might perhaps be given by way of advertisement to the volume. You need not take the trouble of replying to this letter, as the title-page, etc., is generally the last thing done.

"I am mistaken if the public do not thank us for this valuable volume; it shall be handsomely and correctly printed. I hope my friend Mr. Ballantyne will do his best with the new edition of the Novels, Tales, and Romances; the last edition of the Poetical Works, 8 vols., is by no means well done. I fear he will be angry at me

for these free remarks, but his own interest is fully as deeply at stake in the matter as that of any one else, and I hope you will forgive me mentioning it to you.

"I enclose a rare little tract on Quakerism which I met with the other day. I know you respect the Broad Brims! William Penn was a man of talent. I lately had in my possession a valuable little volume of Maxims and Reflections by him, printed at Edinburgh about the year 1676, I think [1694]. I shall indeed be much pleased to see the new work, and you may depend on no bad use being made of it here.—I am, etc. A. C."

CHAPTER X.

Halidon Hill—The Fortunes of Nigel—Quotation from "the Life"—Critique by Sydney Smith—Letter from my father—Letter from Sir Walter Scott, with my father's reply—Visit to Abbotsford—Renewal of friendly intercourse with Mr. Cadell—Dissolution of partnership suggested and averted.

It was during the spring of 1822 that Sir Walter wrote the dramatic sketch entitled Halidon Hill, for the copyright of which he received £1000.

Mr. Cadell writes to my father on May 24th:—"I hope you will be pleased with what I am now going to tell you. I intended to have written to you to-day on the subject at any rate. I have given Sir Walter *one thousand pounds for a poem!* The thing is written, and I hope to have it out in a fortnight. The circumstances are as follow:—

"He only came from Abbotsford on Wednesday. He called yesterday about noon, and seemed displeased at James B. not meeting him for the purpose of talking over a Dramatic Poem he has written. He had been asked by Miss Baillie to contribute a few pages to a pic-nic book, and wrote this, but it turned out too long—it will make as much as Lord Byron's Manfred or his own Waterloo. He said he would date it from Abbotsford, but agreed at my request to put his name to it. The MS. was on B.'s

desk when I went down a little after; I made my calculations, found that 9000 Waterloo had divided £1300; wrote Sir Walter a note, went with it myself, and closed for £1000 *in five minutes.* He seemed much gratified. *He wrote it in two days.* It will pay us out and out, and all over will be ours, besides the copyright. I think you will approve of this. My views were these: here is a commencement of a series of dramatic writings—let us begin by buying them out. The author is so well pleased that I have no doubt of managing the others in the same way. I shall lay on 10,000. I am quite happy to have such a nice little thing to blaze out with just now at the heels of Nigel."

Mr. Lockhart is perhaps correct in describing this transaction as a wild bargain, and it is true that my father cordially approved of the liberal terms that had been offered; but he had surely forgotten that in thus severely characterizing the arrangement, he condemned the living as well as the dead.

In further dealing with the subject, and before quoting in his Life of Scott [1] what he calls my father's "effusion," in approval of the experiment of the dramatic sketch, and admiring welcome of the new novel, Mr. Lockhart says:—

"I must recall to the reader's recollection some very gratifying, but [why *but?*] I am sure perfectly sincere laudation of him in his professional capacity, which the Author of the Fortunes of Nigel had put into the mouth of his Captain Clutterbuck in the humorous Epistle Introductory to that Novel. After alluding in affectionate terms to the recent death of John Ballantyne, the Captain adds—'To this great deprivation has been added, I trust for a time only, the loss of another bibliopolical friend, whose vigorous intellect, and

[1] See Life, vol. v. p. 169.

liberal ideas, have not only rendered his native country the mart of her own literature, but established there a court of letters, which must command respect, even from those most inclined to dissent from many of its canons. The effect of these changes, operated in a great measure by the strong sense and sagacious calculations of an individual who knew how to avail himself, to an unhoped-for extent, of the various kinds of talent which his country produced, will probably appear more clearly to the generation which shall follow the present. I entered the shop at the Cross to inquire after the health of my worthy friend, and learned with satisfaction that his residence in the south had abated the rigour of the symptoms of his disorder.' "

The Fortunes of Nigel[1] was published on the 30th of May 1822, and on the following day my father wrote the letter cited by Mr. Lockhart as the "effusion:"—

"CASTLEBEARE PARK, 31*st May* 1822.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I have received the highest gratification from the perusal of a certain new work. I may indeed say new work, for it is entirely so, and will,

[1] Sydney Smith writes:—"DEAR SIR,—Many thanks for Nigel; a far better novel than The Pirate, though not of the highest order of Scott's novels. It is the first novel in which there is no Meg Merrilies. There is, however, a Dominie Sampson in the horologer. The first volume is admirable. Nothing can be better than the apprentices, the shop of old Heriot, the state of the city. James is quite excellent wherever he appears. I do not dislike Alsatia. The miser's daughter is very good, so is the murder. The story execrable; the gentlemanlike, light, witty conversation always (as in all his novels) very bad. Horrors or humour are his forte. He must avoid running into length —great part of the second volume very long and tiresome; but upon the whole the novel will do—keeps up the reputation of the author, and does not impair the very noble and honourable estate which he has in his brains. I hope you are better, that you are leaving it to your deputies to increase your wealth, and making it your care and the care of your doctors to amend your health.—Your sincere well-wisher, SYDNEY SMITH.

"*June* 21, FOSTON, YORK."

if that be possible, eclipse in popularity all that has gone before it.

"The author will be blamed for one thing, however unreasonably, and that is, for concluding the story without giving his readers a little more of it. We are a set of ungrateful mortals. For one thing at least I trust I am never to be found so, for I must ever most duly appreciate the kind things intended to be applied to me in the Introductory Epistle to this work. I learn with astonishment, but not less delight, that the press is at work again; the title, which has been handed to me, is quite excellent.

"I am now so well as to find it compatible to pay my respects to some of my old haunts in the metropolis, where I go occasionally. I was in town yesterday, and so keenly were the people devouring my friend *Jingling Geordie*, that I actually saw them reading it in the streets as they passed along. I assure you there is no exaggeration in this. A new novel from the Author of Waverley puts aside—in other words, puts down for the time—every other literary performance. The smack Ocean, by which the new work was shipped, arrived at the wharf on Sunday; the bales were got out by *one* on Monday morning, and before half-past ten o'clock 7000 copies had been dispersed from 90 Cheapside.[1] I sent my secretary on purpose to witness the activity with which such things are conducted, and to bring me the account, gratifying certainly, which I now give you.

"I went yesterday to the shop of a curious person—

[1] "Constable's London agents, Messrs. Hurst, Robinson, and Co., had then their premises in Cheapside."

Mr. Swaby in Wardour Street—to look at an old portrait which my son, when lately here, mentioned to me. It is, I think, a portrait of *James the Fourth*, and if not an original, is doubtless a picture as early as his reign. Our friend Mr. Thomson has seen it, and is of the same opinion; but I purpose that you should be called upon to decide this nice point, and I have ordered it to be forwarded to you, trusting that ere long I may see it in the Armoury at Abbotsford.

"I found at the same place two large elbow-chairs, elaborately carved, in boxwood—with figures, foliage, etc., perfectly entire. Mr. Swaby, from whom I bought them, assures me they came from Rome. There were originally ten of them. He had just sold six to the Duke of Rutland, for Belvoir Castle, where they will be appropriate furniture. The two which I have purchased would, I think, not be less so in the Library at Abbotsford. I have been so fortunate as to secure a still more curious article, a mosaic pavement, quite entire, and large enough to make an outer hearthstone, which I also destine for Abbotsford. It occurred to me that these three articles might prove suitable to your taste, and under that impression I am now induced to take the liberty of requesting you to accept them as a small but sincere pledge of grateful feeling. Our literary connexion is too important to make it necessary for your publishers to trouble you about the pounds, shillings, and pence of such things; and I therefore trust you will receive them on the footing I have thus taken the liberty to name. I have been on the outlook for antique carvings, and if I knew the pur-

poses for which you would want such, I might probably be able to send you some.

"I was truly happy to hear of Halidon Hill, and of the satisfactory arrangements made for its publication. I wish I had the power of prevailing with you to give us a similar production every three months; and that our ancient enemies on this side the Border might not have too much their own way, perhaps your next dramatic sketch might be Bannockburn. It would be presumptuous in me to point out subjects, but you know my craving to be great, and I cannot resist mentioning here that I should like to see a battle of Hastings—a Cressy—a Bosworth field—and many more.

"Sir Thomas Lawrence was so kind as invite me to see his pictures. What an admirable portrait he has commenced of you! He has altogether hit a happy and interesting expression. I do not know whether you have heard that there is an exhibition at Leeds this year. I had an application for the use of Raeburn's picture, which is now there; and it stands No. 1 in the Catalogue, of which I enclose you a copy.

"You will receive with this a copy of the 'Poetry, Original and Selected.' I have, I fear, overshot the mark, by including the poetry of The Pirate, a liberty for which I must hope to be forgiven. The publication of the volume will be delayed ten days, in case you should suggest any alteration in the advertisement, or other change.—I have the honour to be, dear Sir Walter, your faithful humble servant,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

Mr. Lockhart adds—

"The last paragraph of this letter alludes to a little volume, into which Constable had collected the songs, mottoes, and other scraps of verse scattered over Scott's Novels, from Waverley to The Pirate. It had a considerable run; and had it appeared sooner, might have saved Mr. Adolphus the trouble of writing an essay to prove that the Author of Waverley, whoever he might be, was a Poet."

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"EDINBURGH, 28*th May* 1822.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—I have been of late a shockingly irregular correspondent, but you will allow that my right hand has not been altogether idle. I learned very agreeable news of your improval by Mr. Cadell since I returned to this town, and I sincerely hope, at the hardy time of life, which you have not passed, the exertions of a constitution naturally so strong as yours, aided by care and proper medicines, may enable you to *fine*, and *renew* your lease. I consider my painful disorder of two years since to have produced this good effect in my favour, since, except being in most particulars stiffer than I used to be, I at no period of my life felt myself healthier or better. I impute a great deal of this to the termly grazing at Abbotsford, and I sincerely hope that you will turn yourself into some park when you return to Edinburgh,—for Park Place by itself is insufficient, notwithstanding its name.

"About the title of the Poetry, I think no part of it can properly be said to be *selected*, and I would prefer the general title,—Poetry contained in the Novels, etc. A word of advertisement might be added, to the following purpose:—'We believe by far the greater part of the poetry

interspersed through these novels to be original compositions by the author. At the same time, the reader will find passages which are quoted from other authors, and may probably debit more of these than our more limited reading has enabled us to ascertain. Indeed, it is our opinion that some of the following poetry is neither entirely original nor altogether borrowed, but consists in some instances of passages from other authors, which the author has not hesitated to alter considerably, either to supply defects of his own memory, or to adapt the quotation more explicitly and aptly to the matter in hand.' Some such passage as this may, I think, suffice to point out the nature of the collection,—for as for separating what is original from what is borrowed, I am sure it is far beyond my power, and probably that of any one else.

"I know your interest in the Swintons. I have made a sorry Drama in two Acts, upon a romantic incident in Pinkerton's History, as having occurred at the battle of Homildown, but which, to avoid breaking my shins against Hotspur, I carried back to that of Halidon. I designed at first to make only a scene or two for a sort of pic-nic which Mrs. Joanna Baillie asked me to contribute to, but as it ran the length of one of the fashionable dramas, like Manfred, it got far beyond her limits, and Cadell offered me (nothing in this case doubting your approbation) £1000, which will enable me to fit out my nephew Walter in great style for the East Indies. The drama is quite finished, and *all* in James B.'s hands.

"I have a curious haul of old papers in my hands just now. Lady Morton having a turn for old papers, took a

fancy to rummage the charter-room at Dalmahoy, and has detected a very curious series belonging to the Regent Morton and Douglas of Lochleven. There are original letters of Queen Mary, of the Regent Murray, Lennox, John Knox, and other eminent persons. Does not this make your mouth water? I have not looked through them yet. One of the most curious, and which perhaps in its form is quite singular, is a sort of historical prayer, in which Lochleven is superfluent enough to remind God Almighty at excessive length of all the things which Omnipotence had achieved for the Kirk of Scotland.

"I enclose a letter which has long been by me, from Sophia. Adieu, my good old friend; I hope your health will soon permit you to come down to your own country, and walk your own fields. I beg my respects to Mrs. Constable and your family, being very sincerely yours,

"WALTER SCOTT.

"Sophia is very proud of her china."

"CASTLEBEARE PARK, 11*th July* 1822.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I had the honour of receiving your most kind and welcome letter of the 28th May. A letter of mine of nearly the same date has, I hope, reached you. I have since had the pleasure of sending you a copy of the first edition of *Michaelis Scoti Phisonomia*, and two or three other little volumes which I thought you would like. I have still some others to forward, particularly the *Ultimum Vale* of John Carleton. The chairs from the Borghese palace, the mosaic slab, and portrait of James IV.,

are forwarded to Leith, in two large cases. In addition, I have sent you a curious carved coat of arms, for which, I daresay, a corner will be found at Abbotsford. I would suggest that care be observed in unpacking the chairs, to prevent injury to the carving. They are unquestionably of Italian workmanship, and will prove, I hope, ornaments of some use. There were ten of these chairs in all brought to England by the Abbé Alotti, as Mr. Swaby informs me. He sold six of them to the Duke of Rutland for Belvoir Castle. Two of them went to Newstead, and the others are here accounted for.

"The letters of the Morton family must indeed be interesting. I wish his Lordship would allow them to be printed. I could, I think, suggest an attractive style of publication. A post octavo volume, with two or three portraits, facsimiles, and other embellishments, would form quite a gem; but the originals would require to be transcribed by an intelligent and careful hand. Of the Regent Morton I fear much good could not be said, though I can hardly suppose that he was quite so hateful a person as Gilbert Stuart's view of his character would make him. You remember the remarkable words used by this historian in summing up the Regent's character: 'and he ascended the scaffold without the consolation of one virtue.' The chronological notes from Lord Fountainhall's MS. is an entertaining volume. I wish my ancient friend Elshender could have copied it a little more correctly. I often laugh when I think of this honest 'Trihodien' when he headed Captain F.'s party on the noted pilgrimage to the loch of Faldonside! I regret

those notes, and also Gwynne's Memoirs, had not been printed, now to have stood by the side of Slingsby, Carleton, and others of our early friends. The present times are unfavourable to the sale of expensive books, even in small impressions.

"I remember, among the many good hints and advices you have given me, there was one, that I should make memoranda of the schemes, projects, and other literary doings in which it had fallen to my lot to have a share. I have not entirely overlooked this. I made some progress last summer in putting down memoranda of my early career, and I believe they occupy nearly 100 pages in 4to, pretty closely written. I would have continued them to the present time, had not my absence from the scenes of my former activity, and the total want of documents to refer to, rendered it impossible for me to have given some of the minute details which I should be desirous of leaving to my children, and it is therefore at rest for the present.[1] I have now been a year in England, and it will not surprise you that I have not to reckon it as the most happy period of my life; but, thank God, it has been passed in the midst of many domestic blessings, of which I could not be deprived. My intercourse with Scotland, however, strange to say, during these twelve long months, would have been utterly cheerless, had not the kindness of your correspondence by times rendered it otherwise. I have also derived some comfort from contriving editions in new shapes of certain popular works, and in successfully disposing of them to the trade, which

[1] See vol. i. pp. 5-33, and Appendix, pp. 533-540.

I believe I told you formerly I had done, without embarking in any outlay, besides having planned a variety of new and important undertakings: some of them, perhaps, I may yet live to see carried into effect, others it is more than probable are destined to survive the conclusion of my exertions. My retirement from the bustle of life cannot therefore be said to have been without its advantages.

"I have made a memorandum of the works of one series, I may say, either at present or immediately to be in the hands of Mr. Ballantyne, from the operations to which I have just alluded. I have marked the periods at which the different books ought to be finished, and I trust they will be so.[1] In the meantime I have amused myself with making calculations of the number of persons necessary to be employed in the progress of these works; but in case it might be said to be out of my department, I must not take the liberty of troubling you with particulars. No office in the world could ever before boast of such employment, and I venture to predict that there will be no rival to it in our day.

"I shall, I hope, return to Scotland ere long, and do so with the intention of residing a few miles from Edinburgh,

[1]

Name of the Work.	Impression.	Number of Sheets.	Reams required.	Number of Volumes.	When to be completed.
Poetical Works of Sir W. Scott. 10 Vols. Min. edition, . . .	5000	134	1474	50,000	1st Oct. 1822.
Novels and Tales. 12 vols. Do.,	5000	360	3960	60,000	1st Feb. 1823.
Historical Romances. 6 vols. Do.,	5000	190	2090	30,000	1st Oct. 1823.
Poetry contained, etc. 1 vol. Do.,	5000	23	253	5,000	1st Jan. 1823.
Total, .	20,000	707	7772	145,000	

and of going to business just as often as circumstances and my health may render it desirable. You have my blessing for your encouraging suggestions as to this mode of life.—I am, etc., A. C."

A few weeks after my father's return to Scotland he paid a pleasant visit to Abbotsford, and shortly thereafter he received the following friendly letter from Sir Walter, who had just witnessed the unpacking of the presents from his publisher,[1] already mentioned at page 220 :—

"ABBOTSFORD, *Oct.* 1*st*, 1822.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—I safely received yours, with Mr. Smith's note enclosed for £250, and thank you for the trouble. Your back was scarce turned before the tardy Michael Mercer brought the large packing-cases, which were found to contain in perfect safety the articles your kindness destined for Abbotsford. I am really ashamed of your munificence, and never in my life was more gratified by the operation of a chisel and a hammer than when the board flew asunder. We are all at variance which of the lots is the handsomest, and decide according to our different tastes. Lady Scott decides for the carved chairs, which are certainly the finest piece of carving I ever saw, and very like the labours of Gibbons; I stand up for King James, who, by the bye, has the pensive look which always seems to augur misfortune; and Lockhart maintains that the piece of mosaic marble is the preferable lot of the whole. I can assure you there are smart debates on the subject, but we are all gratified in reflecting that the

[1] With reference to these Mr. Cadell wrote as follows :—"Presents to Sir Walter are what I most heartily approve of and applaud; he takes them very kindly."

whole are materials from the same kind friend, valuable from the interest which attaches to them, both as pieces of art and his gift. It is settled that the mosaic is not to be put to the purpose of a hearthstone, but handsomely framed with black oak and gilding, as a table to stand below a mirror.

"Your visit here gave me sincere pleasure, as assuring me better of your state of improved health than the occasional meetings we have in town. Still, Exercise must be the motto. I am very happy that Mrs. Constable is so much better, and am very much, dear Constable, your obliged and faithful servant, WALTER SCOTT."

In the spring of 1821, when the state of my father's health made it necessary for him to leave Scotland, friendly relations with his partner had been seriously interrupted by differences of opinion on various important matters, but chiefly, I believe, by Mr. Cadell's opposition, candidly and decidedly expressed, to the naming of Sir Walter Scott as a trustee for his family, under a testamentary deed which my father designed to execute. This nomination Mr. Cadell naturally, and as I think justly, conceived to be in the circumstances an imprudent one, and in a letter of 28th June 1821 he thus sums up his objections:—"This is the only point in your papers that I have thought unlike your usual discrimination, and I flatter myself you will come to my opinion. I am clear, connected as he is with James Ballantyne and Company, and engaged as we are in bills with him and them, Sir Walter would never do as a trustee."

During nine months of my father's residence in England, I find no record of direct correspondence between the partners; but from the following extract of a letter from my father to Mr. Cadell, dated 12th March 1822, it would appear that their uncomfortable relations had induced that gentleman to contemplate a dissolution of the contract between them:—

"I have just come to town in order to converse with our friends here on the subject of your late communications to them relative to the affairs of our firm and copartnery. I can only say that it is neither my wish nor my interest, so far as I know it, to separate from you, and I hope nothing has occurred to prevent an amicable adjustment. I have considered the affair as in the hands of Mr. Robinson on my part for the last six months, and as you did not appear to receive a letter I wrote to you in August before I left Clapham, with that feeling which I expected, and thought it deserved, it certainly did not appear to me that you would expect similar communications till matters were put on their old footing, if that be practicable; indeed, I have had little else to write about except my health, which has certainly improved lately, and respecting it you have heard frequently from our friends, at whose desk I am now writing to you.

"I am not very stout at the present time, and there is besides sickness in my family; I should otherwise have been in Edinburgh ere now, and if you will not come to London, at the risk of my life I shall certainly make the attempt to come to Edinburgh.

"I desire nothing that is not like a man of business,

and I should expect the same of you. On both sides there might, I think, have been kind feelings, and if you have suspected otherwise of me, I shall only now say that you are mistaken."

In consequence of this communication, Mr. Cadell visited my father in the following month at Castlebeare Park, when friendly relations would appear to have been cordially renewed. On April 8, 1822, after the interview, Mr. Cadell writes:—"I will confess, and that with candour, that I felt no inconsiderable peace of mind, and I may say comfort, on walking to town on Friday evening, after being, as I have often been accustomed to be during the last ten years, with faces that recall many pleasing and interesting reflections."

It is evident from the general tenor of my father's correspondence at this period that the precarious state of his health, and absence from his ordinary scene of action, had rendered him more than usually sensitive, and the following remonstrance from Mr. Cadell was occasioned by the strong irritation manifested in consequence of unwillingness on the part of Mr. Macvey Napier to carry out a suggestion my father had made with reference to the Supplement of the Encyclopædia Britannica:—

"You cannot expect to be comfortable, or to live comfortably and do your health justice, if you find fault with all and sundry matters, and suspect every one of militating against your interest. That many suspicions may float through your mind I can easily conceive, but the encouragement of these must injure you. That—your mind and eye, far removed from those scenes which you have been

accustomed to overlook—you must have feelings, and strong feelings too, I can admit as readily as any one; but when your business goes on well and prosperously—when its great and main stays remain firm—when its connexions are as good as ever, and its prospects better, do pray try and banish small matters, and enjoy that quiet your health requires, and that peace your exertions entitle you to. This, I am aware, is more easily said than done; but I submit that it is impossible your health can steadily remain if you do not rather try to soften down asperities than raise up new ones."

Early in August 1822 my father returned to Edinburgh, improved in health, and cheered by the warm welcome of his many friends. The visit of his Majesty George IV. added much interest and excitement to the time, and he was able to be present at the Banquet and the other loyal demonstrations to which it gave rise, although these exhilarating circumstances were overshadowed by a renewal by Mr. Cadell of the proposition that the partnership between them should be brought to an end.

The increased expenses of my father's household, and those occasioned by his family being necessarily scattered, for the purposes of education, had probably at this period added pecuniary difficulties of a personal nature to his other subjects of annoyance and anxiety; and the demand which he felt it necessary to make upon the funds of the copartnery were in consequence so considerable that Mr. Cadell wrote as follows on the 14th August:—

"After the most mature reflection, and viewing it in every point, I cannot bring my mind to any other conclu-

sion than that you and I must cease to be partners in trade. This alternative, of course, is not new to either of us, and I did think, after my first proposal on the subject in April last, that we might still proceed as we have done since Mr. Cathcart's death; but from various circumstances, and more especially Robinson's letter, which I received on Sunday, I am thoroughly convinced that no other course is left to us, and that your peace of mind, your future health and comfort, and the wishes of your family, will be best consulted by your entertaining my proposal, and making up your mind to purchase my share in A. Constable and Company. In stating this I must also say that I also consult my own comfort, for although apparently more able to bear it, my mind is not unlike that of other men, and jarring and contention must harass me as well as others. I do not wish to enter into any discussion; I wish merely to state to you in the present letter that I am quite serious, and that there does not appear any other remedy within my view. Under these circumstances I would beg of you not to exhibit to me any business-plans, but to turn your attention to the subject of this and my former letter. I would say to you, Take time and consider any proposal to me, and your future plans. I shall continue as I am at present till matters are finally arranged, always observing, however, that I give up no right I possess until some arrangement does take place.

"I have made up my mind to this afflicting result with a thorough conviction of its benefit both to you and to myself. I am most fully possessed with the impression

that we cannot conclude our contract of copartnery cordially, and as partners ought. I see many, very many, points of difference, and I cannot remain and subject myself to the imputation that, in standing up for my own rights, I risk a continuation of your present good health, or by opposing what I may not approve of, I am standing in the way of your plans and views.

"I am aware I am putting myself in the way of leaving one of the best concerns in Britain, for its extent; but one will sacrifice many advantages for quiet and peace of mind. Almost all the great literary undertakings of A. C. and Co. have been acquired since I became a partner—much good is yet to come from them; but I cannot, I will not, subject myself to reflections. I shall leave the Cross with the deepest regret, but I see no other course. I shall wish the surviving partner or partners and the concern much good; it will be my interest to do so, in every point of view.

"My counsel to you would be that as little be said as possible on this subject; I have mentioned it to two friends only. I would also advise your son becoming your partner as soon as convenient, that he may make himself acquainted with the affairs of the company as far as possible, in order to aid and assist you; and when I mention him, I think it right to state that I do not think he and I can ever draw together. I state this with no feeling of disrespect; indeed, I have your own authority for it, one thousand times repeated; but having stated it, I conceive it right to place before you one prominent ground for my present course, and that is, if I cannot draw with your son.

as a partner, it is wholly impossible for me to admit his opinion in our deliberations without his being a partner; no man of any spirit, or who regards his own status, can admit any third person, not a partner, being introduced into business discussions.

"Having placed the whole matter thus, I think, calmly before you, I have to beg an equally calm consideration of it on your part."

It may reasonably be doubted whether Mr. Cadell—knowing as he did the formidable entanglements of the Company—conceived it possible that any partner could be found, so heroic as to relieve him from the responsibilities of his position; but from the whole tone of the letter I have just quoted, it is evident that, had such an individual been forthcoming, he would have retired.

What were the arguments adduced by my father, or the concessions made to avert this threatened disruption, I am not aware, but averted it certainly was; and on September 13th I find Mr. Cadell once more bravely facing the difficulties of his position as financial manager of their complicated concern, and suggesting prudential measures for enabling it to reach more comfortable circumstances. "The circumstances of the times," he writes, "are such that I assure you I would like to see the Encyclopædia Britannica (1300 copies) trot at a low price, if such an article as ready money could be touched for them; and if any plan could be devised for this end, I would sell them off and cut down our engagements and transactions: these are both too large, and if they could be moderated by any operation of this kind, our reputation as a company would

go on daily increasing, by our name appearing less in the money market. For some time past many difficulties have presented themselves—the constant routine of our drafts and operations on London, the fictitious roughness created by this, the enormous cost running away with all our gains, and that cost going into the pockets of those who care not for us, and who can recede, and have receded, from us in a day, together with the fear of debt (and I have heard of another this day), makes me feel anxious, very anxious, to see strength given us in capital from our own stock. A partner with capital has often occurred to me, but with the engagements we have, *and their nature*, few or none will grapple."

Despite all difficulties, however, their vessel, under skilful steerage, moved gallantly forward amid shoals of bills, and quicksands of accommodation—the anticipated profits of contracts unfulfilled. But for the wreck of another craft, with whose crew they had unhappily become too closely connected, their ship might ere long have glided into smoother water.

CHAPTER XI.

Peveril of the Peak—Critique by Sydney Smith—Mr. Cadell on a suggested delay in publication of the Novels, and on the "Scott Shakespeare"—Letter from Sir Walter Scott—Mr. Constable's reply—Mr. Lockhart on "Scott Shakespeare"—Mr. Cadell on the same subject—Quentin Durward—Topographical difficulties connected with Plessis-les-Tours.

THE success of Peveril does not seem to have been so great as that of its predecessors; and it will be seen from the following letter that one eminent critic had begun to entertain doubts of the continuance of Sir Walter's popularity. Sydney Smith writes as follows :—

"FOSTON, YORK, *Jany.* 21, 1823.

"DEAR SIR,—A good novel, but not so good as either of the two last, and not good enough for such a writer. The next must be better, or it will be the last. There is, I see, Flibbertigibbet over again. Bridgenorth is not new. Charles is the best done. My opinion is worth but little, but I am always sincere. There is one comfort, however, in reading Scott's novels, that his worst are better than what are called the successful productions of other persons. Many thanks for your kindness, and recollections of me.—Yours very truly, SYDNEY SMITH."

Whatever be the value of the above criticism, public demand continued to be great, and the author's necessities

did not diminish. Indications there are, and I shall ere long quote Mr. Lockhart in corroboration of the fact, that my father would have been well pleased could a longer interval have been obtained between the dates of publication; but the fertility of Scott's imagination and the magical swiftness of his pen were quite exceptional, and some fear was also doubtless entertained, that were any obstacle interposed which he himself did not recognise and appreciate, he might again leave his present publishers, and find a ready welcome in the arms which would have been outstretched on all sides to receive him.

Sir Walter himself was not blind to the possibility that a time might come when it should be necessary for him to "call a halt," as will be seen from the following passage in a letter from Mr. Cadell to my father, dated February 5, 1823, but he was unwilling to intermit his labours until he *felt* the necessity to do so. Mr. Cadell writes:—

"Your letter to Sir Walter (with reference to Shakespeare) wants one or two most important clauses. The first is as to his name; and I do not hesitate to say, except we have his name, the book is not worth paper and print. Without it copy-money appears out of the question. All the books with bare 'Abbotsford' at them leave not one shilling to the projectors. I am the more particular about this, from having heard that he does not intend giving his name,—nay more, has some intention of keeping an interest in the book. The next clause wanting is, that we do not wish this contract to come in the way of the engagements already contracted for with Mr. Ballantyne. I am so thoroughly convinced of the propriety of

his continuing on, on, on, with his works of fancy, that during the last three weeks, wherein I have had the comfort of seeing him almost every day, I have throughout encouraged him by every argument I could think of, and he has taken everything I said with great apparent satisfaction. One day he said—'We shall have to call a halt some day, but we shall ride as long as we can.' On another day he said—'I am wholly against any *hiatus* in these works. I have five or six subjects in my head, and were I either to delay in bringing them out, or something to intervene, the public will expect a finely wrought story, etc. etc., which would work up their expectations, and which there is no chance of their being gratified in; besides, some other person may step into the arena, and give me a heavy oar to work to make up to him again.' On another occasion he said—'I am now young and healthy and strong; some two or three years hence it is hard to say how I may be.'

"So completely is this my own opinion, after the success of Peveril in *four* vols., and at *two guineas*, that I shall do everything in my poor power to accomplish this to us most desirable end. I said to Sir Walter, one of these days, 'I would as soon stop a winning horse as a successful author, with the public in his favour.'

"It is our interest in every point of view to encourage him on. Vol. I. of the *new* is well on. It is to be done in March, and (thank God for it!) two more this year. He says he wants to write up his engagements, and we should do nothing to impede them. On this score I feel so firmly entrenched, and see in it our own advantage as a concern,

that I tell you frankly I am sorry you are stirring Shakespeare just now. Rely on this, Sir Walter will consider nothing in the shape of neglect; had he made a proposal, and we had laid it aside, he might have thought so. I had an idea that the success of Peveril, and the *new* grumbling at its price and size, etc., had struck you in the same way as me, and that you had resolved to be quiet about Shakespeare for a little. We have large advances to him for work *to be done;* so soon as these are accomplished, and he living and well, *then* Shakespeare might do.

"Do not, however, suppose that I am against getting, from Sir Walter, Shakespeare, and whatever more we can. I only want our own interest consulted, in getting back our money advanced as fast as possible, and I shall leave no exertion unmade to get out the works of fancy. Shakespeare, if published to-morrow, would only produce some £5000 at from 12 to 36 or 48 months' credit, and no gain, while one book of three vols. will produce nearly £10,000, and great gain, and it is this we require.

"Such a clause as the following might do:—'We make this proposal under the distinct provision that the work is to have the benefit of your name. Perhaps we may not announce it till the whole nine vols. are considerably advanced, or near completion, but this we can regulate so as to be agreeable to you.' Again,—'We think it right also to state that this arrangement is not considered by us as entitled to come in the way of any of the contracts made with Mr. James Ballantyne, but to proceed with the speed your other engagements allow you to give to it.'

"Without his name the undertaking appears to me

wholly out of the question. Pray, observe this: I am not against this book; I am only against it *without Sir Walter's name*, and against it coming in the way of more important undertakings. If he lives we shall get Shakespeare."

The earliest suggestion of a "Scott" Shakespeare had been made by my father, in his letter from Castlebeare Park, of February 15, 1822, and appears to have been renewed from time to time in personal interviews. The following letters on the subject will be read with interest in sequence. Three volumes of the edition were *completed* before the sad crisis in 1826, but then laid aside; and ultimately, I have been told, *the sheets were sold in London as waste paper!* It is even doubted whether one copy be now in existence.

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, 19*th October* 1822.

"DEAR CONSTABLE,—I have been thinking, ever since you left me, of your literary projects. The Poems I cannot bring my mind to. My own fashion of poetry is at present, from various imitations and other circumstances, rather out of the mode, and were I to adopt another, men would say that I had succeeded ill, because it was not in my own taste; for the present, therefore, this is out of the question, though should I see an opening I have not entirely renounced the Muses.

"The Shakespeare plan I like much better, and could conduct it without interfering with other engagements, since I could have Lockhart's powerful assistance as to

Philology, in which he is very perfectly skilled—as much, indeed, as any one I ever knew. But there is this great objection. If I am to give my name to such a work, people would expect that there should be something added to the mass of information already heaped together on the subject, and would be disappointed when they found I had only performed the humble but very useful task of condensing the information previously collected, retrenching the notes to a reasonable compass, and making, I should hope, a very useful popular edition. The only novelty I could give would be by availing myself of the various foreign commentators who have now exercised their ingenuity upon Shakespeare, and many,—as Schlegel particularly, with considerable success. Still this would not give much novelty, and I fear the public would form erroneous views of the purpose of such an edition, and would of course be disappointed.

"I have always observed that few things are more against a work than any extravagance of expectation on the part of the public, and it would be difficult to prevent that from being excited where an author of some name sets about such a task as you propose. On the other hand, without a name, the book might never take ground at all. I have the matter very sincerely at heart; it could go on slowly (for fast it could not proceed), and would scarce interfere with other things, for that sort of labour is rather an amusement to me as otherwise. Perhaps if I were to bring a play or two by way of experiment, you could better judge what was like to come of it. I have most of the books that would be necessary, for the old

editions have been all ransacked, and the ordinary *variorum* editions mention the varieties of the text, so as to make collation in most cases unnecessary. No doubt a most popular book might be made by putting the notes into an entertaining and popular shape, and with my son Lockhart's assistance for the fag, I would have great pleasure in doing it. But on both our accounts I am much staggered by the objection which I state to you. Were that out of the way I have little doubt upon other points, for really such a work is peculiarly wanted. You may consider all this in your own mind, and let me hear from you at leisure, for there is nothing presses on the subject, as it would take two or three years to bring out such a book creditably.

"I hope this will find you continuing on the mending hand, and taking care of yourself. I am now near coming to Edinburgh, and shall take leave of this place with more than my usual regret.—Yours very truly,

"WALTER SCOTT."

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"*February* 1823.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—Although I have not had the pleasure of communicating with you since receipt of your letter in October last, on the subject of the projected edition of Shakespeare, yet it has had a good deal of my thoughts, and my anxious wish to see such a work executed continues unabated. Of the safety of the undertaking to the bookseller there cannot, I think, be any question, and in the hope that the terms and plan which have occurred to

me may merit your further consideration, I would now respectfully beg leave to lay them before you.

The work which I would propose should be limited to ten vols. 8vo, in a manner similar to the specimen which I now enclose; the type being the same as that used for the edition termed Ballantyne's Shakespeare. The proportions which the notes bear to the text would, at my rate of calculation, be less than one-third and more than one-fourth.

"Suppose the work extended to ten vols., say vol. i. introductory matter, 34 sheets, or 544 pages.

"Thus the introductory matter and text might be said to consist of eight vols.

"Two volumes of notes interspersed through the pages would extend the whole to ten vols.

"The notes being printed on a smaller type than the text, and the average in each page reckoned at eleven lines, occupying the space of nine lines of text, being exactly one-fourth of what would be contained in each page of the seven vols. of text as above estimated, it is apprehended there might besides be sufficient space at the end of the tenth vol. for the Poems of Shakespeare.

"These are professional details, but they are necessary to be kept in view at commencing such an undertaking. I am fully satisfied as to the impossibility of a uniformity of extent of notes, some of the plays of Shakespeare admitting of more and some of less illustration, but it is conceived that the accompanying eight pages might be taken as a fair specimen of the general appearance of the whole.

"Such a work I am aware would require some time to

execute, but with Mr. Lockhart's powerful assistance in the notes, I think you would together not find much difficulty in overtaking it within a reasonable period—say two years after it was begun. The introductory vol. would, as a matter of course, be the last printed. As to terms, I would submit the following to your consideration :—Suppose the copyright estimated at Two thousand five hundred pounds—that we pay One hundred pounds at a period to be agreed on after the completion at press of each of the last nine vols., and One hundred pounds for books and incidents as required, the balance of Fifteen hundred pounds to be paid at the conclusion, at dates to be fixed.

"Having stated formerly my ideas as to the nature of the edition of Shakespeare proposed, I need not again repeat them, or presume to offer my opinion farther as to the literary mode of its execution. It will give me much pleasure to find you favourably disposed to the arrangements suggested in this letter.—And I am with the utmost respect, dear Sir Walter, your obliged and faithful servant.

"*P.S.*—I would limit the first edition to 1250, and not to exceed 1500 copies, without any embellishment, excepting, perhaps, a portrait of Shakespeare. I have a curiosity to show you—an old key from Shakespeare's house at Stratford-upon-Avon; its authenticity is vouched in a manner I think to satisfy the most scrupulous antiquary."[1]

[1] This key is now in the Museum of The Society of Antiquaries.

MR. LOCKHART to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, *Monday, April* 28, 1823.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have had a good deal of conversation with Sir Walter Scott about the Shakespeare, and I believe there will be no difficulty to the plan started by either of us, in case you have quite made up your mind. It is indeed quite impossible that anything should be handsomer than your proposed arrangements, and I can only say that I honestly believe you are the only bookseller the world ever saw that was capable of conceiving and executing such schemes. Long may you both conceive and execute!

"As we shall all be in town so soon, it was perhaps scarcely worth while to write at present, but I thought it was a pity you should lose any time, in case you had any arrangements of other sorts that might by possibility cross or conflict with this matter.

"I should be happy if you would order a copy of Johnson's and Steevens's to be interleaved with quarto paper, for I think that will be the likeliest way for Sir Walter to read over and add to my notes, without too much trouble; and I should think that a considerable part of the Plays might be put into order by the beginning of the winter.

"The Baronet and all the family here are as well as possible. My little boy has apparently quite got out of his influenza. Mrs. Lockhart, who sits by me, sends her compliments.—Yours very sincerely,

"J. G. LOCKHART."

MR. CADELL to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"17*th March* 1824.

"MY DEAR SIR WALTER,—I take the opportunity of this parcel to say a few words on a subject which Mr. Ballantyne mentioned to me shortly before he left this for London; that subject is Mr. Constable's projected edition of Shakespeare.

"I have no hesitation in stating frankly that so far from being averse, I am throughout friendly to the scheme, provided that your other and more valuable avocations were not impeded by it. With the plan, however, of Mr. Lockhart taking the work, and your hand having the introductory volume only to do at your own time, and while the press is occupied with vol. second and its successors, the undertaking cannot be too soon commenced, and you have only to state to me your own views, to meet the most prompt concurrence on my part.

"What I mean I may perhaps explain better by stating that you have only to mention your own ideas as to the time at which, with perfect convenience and comfort to yourself, you could have the volume about Shakespeare ready for the printer.

"I would next ask when Mr. Lockhart can go to press with ease to himself.

"What remains with respect to the mechanical part I shall give every attention to, but pray oblige me by believing I would not wish certain works stopped one day by this undertaking. If it could be so managed as

to appear in the winter of 1824-25 it would be well, but you must decide this.—I remain, etc.,

"ROBERT CADELL, *for A. C. and Co.*"

Quentin Durward was already begun, but Sir Walter's progress in the composition of it was retarded by the difficulty of procuring accurate geographical and statistical information. He wrote as follows to my father on the 18th December 1822:—

"18*th December* 1822.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—Books of history help me little, except Commines. I think there must be some description of the village and castle of Plessis-les-Tours in some of the numerous works, or in some of the old geographical and statistical accounts of France. There are 'Délices de la France,' and books of that kind. If you will send your porter before dinner to-day, I will return the books you kindly sent me. It is topography that I would fain be at. Hamilton's illness has impeded matters much. I have had three long Interlocutors of full about 15 pages each, to write with my own hand; notwithstanding I will, I hope, be done on Wednesday as I proposed.—Yours truly, WALTER SCOTT."

With reference to the same novel my father writes:—

"PARK PLACE, 22*d January* 1823.

"I am sorry I have been unsuccessful in my inquiries after 'the Plans or Views;' there is no work of the kind in any of the libraries here, and I have not been able to get such in London, where I employed a very intelligent

person for the purpose; this, I think, is somewhat singular, but so it is.

"In Gough's *Bibliotheca Topographica Britannica* there is, among many very curious articles, the Memoirs of Sir John Hawkwood, an English archer, about the period you mentioned, and who made some figure in the French wars; perhaps you might wish to see it. This collection of Gough's is in a good many volumes, and must be in the Advocates' Library. I am uncertain of the volume which contains Hawkwood, but I can examine the book, and borrow it if agreeable to you."

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"CASTLE STREET, *Thursday, 23d January* 1823.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—It is a vile place this village of Plessis-les-Tours, that can baffle both you and me. It is a place famous in history, and moreover is, as your Gazetteer assures us, a village of 1000 inhabitants; yet I have not found it in any map, provincial or general, which I have consulted. I think something must be found in Malte-Brun's geographical works. I have also suggested to Mr. Cadell that Wraxall's History of France, or his Travels, may probably help us; in the meantime I am getting on, and instead of description holding the place of sense, I must try to make such sense as I can find hold the place of description.

"I send the very curious account of Scotland, which I take to be unique. I also return History of Buccaneers, 2 vols., belonging to Mr. David.

"I shall be glad when our colds permit us to meet.

"I knew Hawkwood's story. He was originally, I believe, a tailor in London, and became a noted leader of condottieri in Italy.

"I will be obliged to Mr. David to get from the Library, and send me, the large copy of Philip de Commines, in 4to. I returned it, intending to bring mine from Abbotsford, but left it in my hurry, and the author is the very key to my period. I am delighted all is going on so well. Yours very sincerely, WALTER SCOTT."

CHAPTER XII.

Article "Romance" in Encyclopædia—Letter from Sir Walter, with gift of Manuscripts, and my father's reply in acknowledgment—First suggestion of *Magnum Opus*—Death of Mr. Thomas Scott—Dialogue on Popular Superstitions—Letter from my Father—The Curse of Scotland—Unsanctioned dramatizing of Waverley Novels—Letters from Sir Walter Scott on various subjects—Quentin Durward "frostbitten"—Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Lockhart on the question of longer intervals—"The Bogles"—Publication of Quentin Durward—Mr. Cadell quotes a note from Sir Walter Scott to Mr. Ballantyne, and gives his own views as to the future.

AT no period of their intercourse does there appear to have existed a kindlier feeling between Sir Walter and my father than at this time. It was on the 10th March 1823 that he wrote the following letter, presenting to his publisher the original MSS. of all his works which were then in his possession. The 'Romance' alluded to in the concluding sentence is the essay on that subject which Sir Walter contributed to the Supplement of the Encyclopædia Britannica :—

"CASTLE STREET, 10*th March* 1823.

"DEAR CONSTABLE,—You who have so richly endowed my little collection cannot refuse me the pleasure of adding to yours. I beg your acceptance of a parcel of MSS. which I know your partialities will give more value to than they deserve, and only annex the condition that they

shall be scrupulously concealed during the author's life, and only made forthcoming when it may be necessary to assert his right to be accounted the writer of these novels.

"I enclose a note to Mr. Guthrie Wright, who will deliver to you some of them which were in poor Lord Kinnedder's possession; and I will send some from Abbotsford, which will, I think, nearly complete the whole, though there may be some missing leaves.

"I will set about the Romance immediately, which will relieve my other labours. I hope you are not the worse of our very merry party yesterday.—Yours truly.

"WALTER SCOTT."

The original of this valuable letter lay long in the hands of the late Mr. Cormack, S.S.C., to whom it had been intrusted for purposes connected with the bankruptcy of my father's house. In a letter of September 29, 1829, Mr. Cormack wrote to my brother David, with reference to the document:—"I shall take care that Sir Walter Scott's letter is preserved for you." The letter was seen by me some years ago in the possession of Mr. Cormack, but since his death it has mysteriously disappeared; and I embrace this opportunity to request that any person into whose hands it may fall will kindly restore it to myself, who claim to be its legal owner, intimating at the same time that I shall gladly reward my benefactor with another autograph letter of the distinguished writer, or by a handsome gratuity.

On the envelope of the above letter my father wrote —"The most kind and valuable letter I ever received,"

and on the 25th March 1823 he wrote the following reply :—

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I need not attempt to express how much I feel gratified by your very kind letter of the 10th inst., accompanying manuscripts[1] to which it refers. I have since received the additional parcel from Abbotsford, and I am in daily expectation of receiving those which were in the possession of Lord Kinnedder. I shall have great pride in preserving these invaluable treasures as memorials of your liberality and confidence; indeed, the gift is such as you only could bestow,—and, you will forgive me for adding, such as yourself only would have made. The whole shall be carefully arranged with my own hand, and be forthcoming when required.

"The possession of these inestimable originals has occasioned me some anticipations as to what may happen at a future day; for it need not be disguised that there has been nothing produced in the literary world at any period, about which there will be hereafter so much said, written, and published, as the works of the Author of Waverley. There will be attempts at illustrations, etc., notes of all sorts, kinds, and descriptions, full of absurdities and blunders;—and in my opinion it is the author only who could do anything at all acceptable in the way of genuine illustration. The characters, incidents, and descriptions in which all of them so fully abound have either originated in what may be termed reality, or are drawn from sources but little known. I would respect-

[1] A list of these will be found at page 442 of the present volume.

fully submit this to you as a project for consideration; and if you will permit me, I shall have a set of all the Tales, Novels, and Romances interleaved, and neatly done up, to be placed in a suitable cabinet in your private study, or wherever you may think proper.

"I am taking a great liberty in these suggestions, but you receive everything from me with so much kindness that I cannot resist them. It might perhaps amuse you in your leisure to renew your acquaintance with Flora Mac-Ivor, the Laird of Balmawhapple, my friend Dumbiedykes, and our other recorded worthies. The book so illustrated would be a valuable present to posterity, but would probably only be available as literary property at a distant day.

"I have read the first volume of Quentin Durward with great delight, and it will please the numerous admirers of all that has gone before it. If the three vols. could be got ready next month, the work would appear in London in the full season, and I should be on the spot, and have the pleasure of witnessing its reception, as I propose going south next week. I expect the journey will do my health good, and there are some matters of business in prospect over which I am desirous of having a superintending eye. I shall limit the objects of my visit, as I am not fit for bustle as formerly; and I hope to return home about the beginning of May. I trust you will have some commands for me, and if Lady Scott has any commissions it will give me great pleasure to execute them.

"I forwarded the letter to Miss Edgar with my best compliments, and I shall do all I can to promote the sub-

scription for her Poems. I have seen Major M—— frequently, but I fear I must dissuade him from reprinting Chin-zica,—he is a modest man, but a determined poet; and I have prevailed with Miss Croom to remain in Limerick for the present.

"A complete set of honest John Nichols' literary anecdotes shall be sent you. The *variorum* Classics may as well, I suppose, remain here till the library is ready at Abbotsford. I lately met with an article of considerable rarity—a pack of playing-cards, fifty-four in number, with the arms of the Peers of Scotland engraved upon them by Walter Scott, goldsmith in Edinburgh, 1691. I had seen a card a great many years ago, and never expected to meet with a perfect set of them. I am making inquiry as to Walter Scott, and I shall ere long have the pleasure of offering you the cards, and at the same time the particulars of anything I may learn respecting him.—I am, etc., ARCHD. CONSTABLE."

In this letter from my father we have the earliest suggestion of the annotated edition of Sir Walter Scott's works, that *opus magnum* as it has been justly called, which proved, as the great man himself anticipated, "a mine of wealth for his creditors," enabling him to leave the world the grand moral example of an intellectual hero labouring successfully for the extinction of pecuniary claims which neither law nor justice would otherwise have demanded. In his diary of January 19th, 1826,[1] he alludes to this great scheme as being my father's sugges-

[1] See Life, vol. vi. p. 193.

tion, but in December 17, 1827, in forgetfulness of the letter just quoted, he writes of it as "Cadell's plan,"[1] and Mr. Lockhart seems also to have regarded it as such;[2] but as Mr. Cadell was privileged to reap the solid fruits of the undertaking, I may be pardoned if I seek to vindicate for my father any praise that may be due to the original suggester.

"ABBOTSFORD, 26*th March* 1823.

"DEAR CONSTABLE,—I had your kind letter to-day. I have been something disconcerted by the melancholy tidings of my poor brother Tom's death. When you are separated from the only human being to whom the events of your early youth and boyhood can have a mutual interest, it is an uncommonly bitter recollection. Besides, though differing in many respects, we always maintained a sincere regard for each other; and though I had long laid my account with my never seeing him again, yet the stroke which has rendered it impossible has its own proper pain. . . . He was completely possessed of his mind to the last, and died like a man, firmly and quietly, his last hours employed in comforting his family.

"I have no doubt—to come to other matters—that, with corresponding exertion on the part of our fat friend, Durward will be out in the time you mention, the third volume as well; and nothing relieves the heartache like a little task-work.

"I am thinking of a thing in the way of a supernumerary exertion, which is, revising and putting together

[1] See Life, vol. vii. p. 94. [2] *Ibid.* p. 97.

what I have had by me for some years—a dialogue on Popular Superstitions. An essay was read on this subject in the Royal Society, which put me in mind that I had some sheets on the subject. There are a good many narratives in the work, and the whole is at the fireside; still you may believe I do not mean '*Enquirens Philalethes*' kind of speakers; but when I say a dialogue I mean a conversation among persons sustaining different characters, and illustrating their opinions according to these characters. I have a notion such a thing as this might help my getting Walter on full-pay as lieutenant, which I am now negotiating. I should wish the work to be strictly anonymous, and beg your opinion as to the form, and so forth. I presume Mrs. Constable goes to the south with you, and I hope you will take Abbotsford on your way, and spend a day or two with us, which will give Lady Scott and me great pleasure, besides giving us an opportunity of talking over old scores and new plans. I am not engaged, except from the 2d April to the 5th, inclusive, when the Circuit comes in the way; pray think of this. I am most extremely interested in the pack of cards, and my namesake who published them. It is odd that, living just at the time of Satchel, he should have escaped that worthy enumerator of the right honourable and rough clan.

"One thing I am extremely curious to know: whose arms are upon the Nine of Diamonds? I think that circumstance will ascertain, what I never heard well accounted for, namely, why the card is called the Curse of Scotland.

"It is generally supposed to refer to Lord Stair, principal agent in bringing about the Union. If it bears his arms it proves the fact. Pray write to me to let me know this.

"Stave off poor Chin-zica if you can. I do not, from my recollections, think it will do; it is only leading the gentleman, otherwise a man of sense and perhaps accomplishment, into an idle delusion.—Dear Constable, yours truly, WALTER SCOTT.

"I open my letter again to say that I think your *interleaved copy* of the Novels would frighten; such notes as are worth making I will either write in my memoirs of my own life and literary history, or in a separate blank-paper book. In the former work I have made some progress, and the paper books shall be yours if I go before you. There is but little curious in the outlines given of the Tales of My Landlord; only one letter I have somewhere, remarkably well written, but anonymous, suggesting, and indeed narrating, the outlines of Jeanie Deans and her quiet, unpretending heroism. The facts are real, and scene and place (I think Dundrennan, near Dumfries) are mentioned.

MR. CONSTABLE TO SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"31*st March* 1823.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—It was with much regret I received the intelligence of the death of your brother, Mr. Thomas Scott. He possessed excellent talents and great goodness of heart, which, with other advantages, promised to have done much for his advancement in life; but his lot was

no an uncommon one. He was a firm friend of mine at an early period of my career. . . . I am very happy to find you intend publishing a volume on the Popular Superstitions, which I know has long been a favourite subject of yours. The text, I suppose, will be illustrated by narratives and notes. I would suggest making it a post 8vo volume in rather a better style of printing than Ivanhoe, etc., and, if agreeable to you, we shall be happy to consider the sum of £500 for the copyright at your command, at any date to be mutually arranged, to meet the object which it gives me much pleasure to hear you have in view for the disposal of it. A volume has just appeared on the subject by Mr. Grant Stewart, of which a copy shall be sent you by first opportunity, and Dr. Hibbert is printing an amplified edition of the essay read before the Royal Society; the subject is thus likely to attract considerable notice. I shall request Mr. Ballantyne to be prepared for your work whenever you may find it convenient to send manuscript, and it shall be brought out strictly anonymously.

"I have looked at the Nine of Diamonds, which contains the arms of the Earls of Roxburghe, Kellie, and Haddington, who, I believe, were scaithless noblemen of their day. I expected to find it contain those of Viscount Stair. The Nine of Diamonds is universally called the Curse of Scotland. I remember hearing from George Paton, a number of years ago, that this card had been so named from one of them having been used for the order to massacre the Macdonalds of Glencoe in the year 1692, which took place the year following the publication of the

Goldsmith's Cards. I am not sure but the circumstance is noticed in some of the pamphlets which appeared at the time; at all events, I think we may conclude that it would be one of the Peers' cards that would be at hand and used on the occasion. There is a game often played by young folks called Pope; the Nine of Diamonds stands for Pope Joan, and takes all; but this, of course, is known to you, and whether it can have an allusion to any event in our history. I would have sent the pack to you at once, but delay a few days till a suitable case is made for them. I daresay a set of them is nowhere else to be found. I am surprised Satchel took no notice of his namesake, but perhaps the Edinburgh citizen had not come into vogue when the old soldier dictated his metrical history of the clan.

"We might now, if agreeable to you, announce Durward (I am rather partial to 'Quentin Durward,' it reminds one of Guy Mannering); indeed, it might be useful to do so without delay. I hope you will pardon my throwing out this hint.

"I do not know whether the dramatic pieces which have lately come out in such abundance have attracted your notice. I have a volume of them to send you, printed by a Mr. Huie, and Mr. Murray has published his drama of George Heriot, and there is another in Huie's collection. The two publishers are squabbling about what they call the copyright, and have now a process before the Sheriff on the subject. The printed pieces are almost verbatim from the original works, which no one can use without the consent of those to whom the copyrights be-

long, and I rather think that this subject is too important to be longer overlooked; indeed, I have an idea that it is throwing away advantages that others would not allow. Might there not be an arrangement made, so as to secure in the *first instance* the right of any dramatic performance regarding Quentin Durward; at all events, the attempt would be worth making. An English gentleman now here, who had dramatized Ivanhoe, told me that he had got (I think) from £300 to £400 for it at Covent Garden. I have for some time been of opinion that, permitting so many publications under the very titles of the works of the Author of Waverley, and composed entirely either of the very words, or at all events of abridgments of the originals, may have a tendency to injure the circulation of the larger works. I used to consider them formerly as acting to a considerable extent as advertisements; but the thing now assumes a more formidable aspect, and you will perhaps be of opinion that what I am now stating is worthy your early consideration. The theatres are entirely supported by these works. I am fully aware that the author will not propose any illiberal restrictions, but there is no need of fortunes being allowed to pass into other hands without a share coming to those who best deserve them.

"With regard to my going to London, I think I shall leave this about Wednesday, 9th. It will give me great pleasure to wait upon you at Abbotsford. I was anxious that Mrs. Constable should accompany me to London, but the journey would be attended with more fatigue than she is quite able to undertake. She is to give me a Scots

convoy, however, and will be with me at Abbotsford on the 9th, agreeably to your kind invitation. I fear you will say I write you too long letters. I wish I could make them more concise; and I am, etc.

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, 1*st April* 1823.

"DEAR CONSTABLE,—I write chiefly to say that the only day in which we are compelled to be absent from home for a day (returning at night) is Wednesday, 9th; and as you propose setting out *about* that time, we will hope to see you at Abbotsford on Thursday, 10th, to lie by and rest at least the next day. Mrs. Constable, I trust, will be able to accompany you, and you may believe will find a cordial welcome at Abbotsford.

"What you say about theatrical matters seems extremely reasonable in one sense, but there are such great objections to interfering with these matters as incline me at present to think differently. We will talk this over with our goblets, etc., when you come here.

"The Curse of Scotland is a queer puzzle; I cannot believe Glencoe is concerned, which, though a shocking thing, could not be termed a grand or national calamity. I rather think it had some relation to the Union.

"My pen and eyes are both wearied, or I would send you a longer letter, having much to say.—Yours truly,

"WALTER SCOTT.

"I roup six parks on 18th; there is importance for you!"

While in London my father received several communications from Sir Walter, from which I make the following quotation :—

"EDINBURGH, *24th May* 1823.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—I received your kind letter, and trust you have since had mine, oppressing you with all sorts of commissions, to which I need not refer, excepting in so far as it was incomplete, from my not recollecting one or two books to add to my list. I think I mentioned the King of France's Escape, in French. Also, I see advertised true 'Ghost Stories,'—a catchpenny, I daresay. I wonder if it be possible to pick up among the rubbish of circulating libraries 'Edwin and Anna,' a Northumbrian tale, in two volumes. As I remember, for it is many years since I saw it, it contains some singular particulars about incidents and families in the east Border, about sixty or seventy years ago. Terry is not unlikely to grub up this, as he has done other recondite works. I will hope to hear from you when you and he have talked over my very important commissions.

"I have a very polite letter from Mr. Petizon,[1] who meant his matters quite right, but does not, I suppose, understand the value of certain volumes. Of course the thing is to be taken as it was meant, kindly and civilly. I will not taste the stuff, which I believe is capital, until you come back to do me reason in a bumper. I have foolishly forgot the name of his correspondents, but Messrs. Hurst and Robinson will know them, and have the goodness to forward the enclosed.

[1] Sir Walter here refers to a small case of champagne, sent in exchange for a set of the Waverley Novels.

"I have got Walter home as large as life. Poor fellow! he has got the influenza, with some fever, but I hope will be soon well. I hope to see him and Charles united to my family, and with Lockhart and Walter the Less, who will be down at the same time, my board will make a very patriarchal appearance. I hope to see you there before all my flock are dispersed again. I have some reason to be proud as a father of their appearance and disposition. Pray write soon, and let me hear all the news. I have none to send you from this, saving that vol. I. is pushing on at a handsome rate, and our fat friend *pressing* and *puffing* in no small style.

"My kind regards to Mrs. Constable.—Believe me, always most truly yours, WALTER SCOTT.

"On Saturday 31st, please God Walter be well, I shall take a peep at Abbotsford to prepare barracks for my troops."

"CASTLE STREET, *June* 18, 1823.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—Your valuable present of rare tracts reached me safe, and forms a most curious and important addition to the Jacobite and religious collection, not forgetting those of *Diablerie*. What are your motions to be? Do you remain in the south a month or two, or come down immediately? If after the 12th, I hope you will make a stage at Abbotsford, now that Mrs. Constable has learnt the way there. I wish you could have dined in Castle Street, 4th July, with Committee of Bannatynians. We shall have haggis and whisky, and claret in the silver stoup,—*more majorum*. What a pity old Greysteel is

under the sod! We shall miss our fat friend too, who I believe goes to Harrogate next week.

"I am sorry to find our friend Q. D. is somewhat *frost-bit,* which I did not expect. If on consideration it is thought necessary to have greater intermission betwixt these affairs, which I think may be the result, we must keep the mill going with something else.[1] I have to tell you, on Lady Scott's part, that there will be clamours about the bed you undertook to look out for. I mentioned a few books which I wanted from London. Modern publications are little worth, but which we must have to keep up stock.

[1] "Very shortly before the bookseller left Edinburgh he had concluded another bargain (his last of the sort) for the purchase of Waverley copyrights—acquiring the author's property in The Pirate, Nigel, Peveril, and also Quentin Durward, out and out, at the price of five thousand guineas. He had thus paid for the copyright of novels (over and above the half profits of the early separate editions) the sum of £22,500; and his advances upon 'works of fiction' still in embryo, amounted at this moment to £10,000 more. He began, in short, and the wonder is that he began so late, to suspect that the process of creation was moving too rapidly. The publication of different sets of the novels in a collective form may probably have had a share in opening his eyes to the fact, that the voluminousness of an author is anything but favourable to the rapid diffusion of his works as library books—the great object with any publisher who aspires at founding a solid fortune. But he merely intimated on this occasion that he thought the pecuniary transactions between Scott and himself had gone to such an extent, that, considering the usual chances of life and health, he must decline contracting for any more novels until those already bargained for should have been written.

"Scott himself appears to have admitted for a moment the suspicion that he had been overdoing in the field of romance; and opened to Constable the scheme of a work on Popular Superstitions, in the form of dialogue, for which he had long possessed ample materials in his thorough mastery of perhaps the most curious library of *diablerie* that ever man collected."—See Life, vol. v. p. 279.

I will be happy to hear from you at your leisure. If you come down in July we shall be at Abbotsford, and in possession of our new house. I send this under cover to Terry, and am always most truly yours,

"WALTER SCOTT."

The offer by my father of £500 for the copyright of a work on *Popular Superstitions* had not been satisfactory, and I extract the following passage with reference to it from a letter of Mr. Cadell's, dated May 13, 1823:—"Sir Walter has just been here in great glee. He has begun the New—it is a Scotch story. I have just seen Ballantyne. I fear *the Bogles* are dormant in the meantime. When Ballantyne last saw him he said, 'Well, James, I have copy ready for you.' B. said, 'Is it *the Bogles*, Sir Walter, or a new work?' 'No, no,' replied Sir Walter, 'it is not *the Bogles;* I got no encouragement, the offer was inadequate,—hoot, man, it's no' *the Bogles.*'"

Mr. Cadell's letter of May 19th tells us—"I do not think Sir Walter will be easily turned aside from writing these books. I had a long crack with him on Thursday last. Among other things, he said they were no trouble to him, from systematic labour. I hinted at *the Bogles.* He said he would take it up some day. I said, 'Sir Walter, perhaps we did not offer you so much as it might be worth; the best way may be to try 2000 or 3000 copies, and see what our friends the public say.' He answered, 'I dare say we will just do that some day; but I find no such profitable way of employing my time as the present trade.'"

On the 16th May 1823 Quentin Durward reached the

metropolis, and early in the forenoon of the 17th the London booksellers had all received their full supply. So writes my father on the afternoon of that day, and a week later, on the 23d inst., he adds:—"There are 1600 copies left this morning, and few second orders have yet come in. People in the country hardly believe that another work *can be* so soon after Peveril; they have upwards of 1100 Peveril still on hand, consequently 1000 must still go off to make the sale of both equal with H. R. and Co. There is no satisfying the public, and in the midst of much applause of Quentin I sometimes hear murmurs about its coming *too quick* for the pocket. There is unparalleled genius in the works of the Author of Waverley,—but novelty has helped their sale."

On the 12th June I find Mr. Cadell quoting as follows to Mr. James Ballantyne from a letter of Hurst and Co.:—"We regret to say that we have no orders for Q. D. Be the cause what it may, I assure you this is the fact. Our sale is deficient 1000 copies, and yet the book is more admired than any one since Ivanhoe. I think it proper to place this before you, that you may state it in your own way in the proper quarter. But, under these circumstances, I would honestly, as a prudent man of business, say that we ought to delay making a new bargain till we try our good friends the public with the book now in progress, and perhaps another. *We may gorge the public.* Bank of England notes fall in value by an over-issue; and with four works contracted for, which will in time make another £5000 series, perhaps there is enough in the meantime, not to create repletion.

"Our best and anxious exertions shall not be wanting to fill up the hole this may make in your July arrangements, and this we shall easily arrange—pray state this to Sir Walter; but it would be unfair towards him not to state frankly the set of the current."

Coincidence of opinion as to increase of the interval between the appearance of successive novels, and further consideration of the subject, had led Mr. Cadell to adopt his partner's views, and on the 12th and 13th June I find him writing to my father as follows:—

"I am at present going into the July matters with James Ballantyne, as he is compelled on account of health to go to Harrogate. I expect before closing this to have something more to say about them; and if I succeed in my plans I think you will commend what I am doing. I am most cordially seconded by James B. . . .

"About ten days ago James Ballantyne hinted at a new bargain to help their July payments. I was annoyed at it, but said little; but on Wednesday last, when he told me he was going south in a few days, and that he was going to arrange July and take in a new bargain, I thought it proper to have a serious conversation on the point. I was well backed in this by your letter, Robinson's, and a letter of Charnley's, which I enclose; these I went for and read to Ballantyne. He was forcibly struck with them all, and we cordially agreed to table the matter to the author, and he assured me, if clearly done, it would have the best possible effect. I consequently wrote the letter yesterday morning, of which you have a copy with this. Charnley's letter I sent; but it may be right to

remark here that Charnley complains without cause,—apparent at any rate to me, and this I told him. He has got twenty-five of each of the three last, and on the same sheet on which he complains of Quentin he orders *one more*; but you will see that I did not allude to this to James Ballantyne: Charnley's was too good a letter for my purpose, *and it has done the deed.* I have much pleasure in saying that I have carried my purpose. Ballantyne has just called in passing, and put into my hands Sir Walter's answer, of which what follows is a copy verbatim:—

"'DEAR JAMES,—I am going out of town at three o'clock, and do not return till Monday or Tuesday. I will call at the office and talk over these letters, which neither surprise nor dismay me.

> "The mouse who only trusts to one poor hole,
> Can never be a mouse of any soul.'

"'I will carry the proof with me, and return it by post from Fife.—Yours, W. SCOTT.

"'CASTLE STREET, 2 *o'clock, Thursday.*'

"Ballantyne thinks the matter has got a quietus, and he and I were agreed, before mooting the matter, that now was the time. An excellent book, but still the public not well pleased. If it had been done on the heels of a bad book, Ballantyne thinks he would have said, 'Never fear, the next shall be better;' but from his general conversation Ballantyne was confident he would take it well. Ballantyne's interest in the matter is as great as ours—to get off from advancing money—the more when four bargains

still exist, it will be most important for us to get off advances and get out our bargains. I saw there was no time to be lost, and I therefore exhibited the whole affair promptly and strongly. You will see I alluded to your and Joseph Ogle Robinson's letter received yesterday, for the sake of effect and *hitting the nail home.* I have had some anxiety since yesterday on this score, and feel great relief at the result, in which I daresay you will participate. . . .

"In case you should think Sir Walter's mouse rhyme alludes to changing *his* hole, rely on it there is no fear of that. Ballantyne thinks he has taken my letter *well.*"

On the 17th June Mr. Cadell recurs to the subject thus :—

"I have just had a long conversation with Ballantyne, with whom Sir Walter was for some hours this forenoon. He returned from the country yesterday. B. says that Sir Walter was very serious on the subject of my letter of the 12th, and said, 'This does surprise me, only by Quentin being so much admired; if it had been a bad book I would not have cared, but we must think what is to be done. We cannot wipe any sum off July, as I calculated on; that is no matter, but what is to be done with the public? I shall call on Cadell and converse with him on the subject.'

"The foregoing was the substance of what he said, so that there will, I trust, be no proposition for a new bargain for some time to come, if at all; at any rate till those contracted for are written. I expect a call from Sir Walter to-morrow, or some of these days. I shall do

nothing more to damp him; enough is attained in the meantime, but I shall not wait for his asking my advice. I shall state to him with candour that he must not stop with that now in hand. He must not allow himself to be beaten, or appear to be beaten. He calculated on it being ready in August. I shall counsel to go on and finish it by October (vol. i. is almost done), but if he could at the same time do the book on *Bogles*, let them be printed at the same time, and come out as soon after as he chose, or at the same time. As he can do more than the novel, he may as well do this. I shall further say to him, 'Go on, Sir Walter, with a novel, so soon as that now in hand is done; but perhaps it may be as well to calculate on its employing you say for six months. You can in the vacant space perhaps give your time to the History of Scotland, which will give you no trouble. The Author of Waverley will not appear therefore to have stopped writing, but bring out his books more leisurely, and diversify the scene with something new.' This, of course, you may suppose I shall state as respectfully as it is practicable; but after conversing with Ballantyne most fully I have resolved on a tone such as this—and one reason is this, he is damped at the idea of no resources coming in; now *the Bogles* will in time bring resources, and so will the History, and largely too. At the same time, our own interest will be kept in view in writing up his bargains, which it is important not to let fall asleep.

"One thing is attained—the author is convinced that it is prudent to have no more contracts in the meantime; but he must not be too much damped, and when I come

upon the subject with him I shall take care not to say too much in that tone."

In my father's letter from London of the same date, I find:—"I had your long letter dated 12th and 13th, yesterday. Your communication with Mr. Ballantyne respecting *a fifth work* from the Author of Waverley was in all respects proper; and I sincerely hope, for the sake of all concerned, that any further proposition will be allowed to rest a while. I have much to say on the subject of our interest in these important matters, which I need not attempt to detail in this letter."

On June 18th Mr. Cadell writes:—". . . James Ballantyne, who has been with Sir Walter for some hours, has just called, and reports that the Baronet is quite satisfied with the course I have pursued, 'only,' said he, 'he must manage your July matters for you.' I am therefore, at Sir Walter's request, to take in charge James Ballantyne and Co.'s matters till the Harrogate trip is over, and I think I shall call on Sir Walter to-day or to-morrow if he does not call here. James repeated his and my conversation yesterday, and on saying, 'Mr. Cadell is quite decided,' he observed Sir Walter knit his brows and look as if displeased, supposing perhaps that something disagreeable was coming. Ballantyne went on, 'Mr. Cadell is quite decided as to your not stopping with the book now in progress; but in place of finishing it in August, finish it in October.' The Baronet's face brightened up instantly, and he said, 'That is exactly my own conclusion; I shall write three sheets a week, which is mere amusement to me, but between this and October

I shall think of something else.' He said afterwards, 'I will not stop the novels; I may take them more leisurely, but we must have something else to make up the blank.' Thus the matter rests. I have given you the whole affair almost verbatim. Ballantyne is, you know, a little theatrical in his conversation; what is on the other side is as nearly his words as I can recollect. He left me with the expression, 'Sir Walter is quite pleased.'"

CHAPTER XIII.

Letters from my father regarding pecuniary matters—Sir Walter's reply—Messrs. Constable and Co. to Sir Walter Scott—Postponement of visit to Abbotsford—Letter from Sir Walter Scott on financial matters, with my father's reply—Sir Walter Scott to Messrs. Constable and Co., with their reply—Sir Walter Scott to my father—Statement of bills and counter-bills.

CONCURRENTLY with the consideration of Sir Walter's literary engagements, and in direct connexion with these, his publishers had been laying to heart, even more seriously than usual, their pecuniary involvements, especially with James Ballantyne and Co., and on Sir Walter Scott's account.

On the 8th of August 1823 my father wrote to Sir Walter Scott from Hatton, near Edinburgh, whither he had removed with his family for the summer months :—

"*Most Private.*

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I am remaining here for a few days in quiet, thinking over many things of importance. Now that the state of my health enables me to look a little more into matters of business than has unfortunately been the case for some years, nothing ought to have a greater share of my attention, or is, indeed, so well entitled to it, as the undertakings in which it has been my fortune to embark with you. It has always afforded me

the most peculiar pleasure to find the results so mutually satisfactory, and it will be the pride and best exertion of my future life to preserve them so. On looking into the state of the dealings of my house, however, with that of our friends James Ballantyne and Co., I cannot help remarking that they might be placed on a more manageable and less expensive footing, particularly in regard to the money transactions, of the magnitude of which I have only just now become fully aware. I have different plans in view, by which I think this might be effected to the safety and satisfaction of all concerned, but find it impossible to go more fully into the thing in this letter, and only make the present personal private and confidential communication for the purpose of bringing these important points to some farther discussion (at all events) between yourself and me.

"I need not say that I am sure you will not misconceive the motive which has induced this letter, and you will, I hope, grant me the favour I now request, which is, that you take an early opportunity of requiring A. Constable and Co. to furnish you with your own account-current, also that with James Ballantyne and Co., that you may have before you, in one view, a full statement of the transactions they contain. I am prompted to this from reasons which apply to the interests of all concerned, and from no other.

"If you favour me with a reply to this letter, which is altogether between ourselves, I would request it to be addressed as above, and I am, etc., A. C."

Again, on the 17th inst., he writes :—

"EDINBURGH, 17*th Aug.* 1823.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—Being anxious to have some conversation with you on certain points of business, particularly the present state of our mutual money transactions, —the amount of which falling due this year appears to me so considerable that I think it would be prudent to take early measures for putting them on a more manageable footing,—it would give me great pleasure to wait upon you at Abbotsford on Wednesday or Thursday next, if either should suit your engagements. I mention those days as the most convenient to myself, but I will be at your command on any other.

"It is unnecessary for me to add that my motive in writing the present letter, and proposing troubling you so soon again at Abbotsford, arises entirely from a wish to discharge to the best of my judgment and ability the duty which I owe you in matters so important to the comfort and welfare of us all. Perhaps you will do me the favour to write two lines in course, and I am, etc., A. C."

To this letter Sir Walter Scott replied as follows:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—I will be happy to communicate with you on the subject you mention, so important to us all. I have a complete state of these affairs, made up at Whitsunday, and have knowledge also of what has been done in the way of reduction in addition since that time. I am therefore quite prepared to receive your opinion and the advice your experience may enable you to afford. Had matters continued in their usual train, the reduction

would have been greater; as you see, it is very considerable. I will be glad either to hear from or to see you on these subjects, and am always very truly yours,

"WALTER SCOTT."

On the 18th August my father made the following intimation to Mr. Cadell:—"I have written to Sir Walter Scott of my intended visit to Abbotsford, and enclose copy of the letter, which be so good as order into the quarto letter-book. My wish is to lay a full view of all the *pros* and *cons* and engagements of every description before Sir Walter, and I shall show you to-morrow what I propose. It is made up as at 1st August, date of the last document you gave me. I wish you would make up the state which you proposed laying before him—that both may be considered."

MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND CO. to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"19*th August* 1823.

"With reference to our Mr. Constable's letter to you of the 17th, perhaps we may as well place before you distinctly what was then adverted to.

"It is now some months since we placed before Mr. Ballantyne the state of the bills current betwixt his and this firm without value, and expressed then the propriety of abating the amount as far as possible; we are the more especially struck with this at present, from the chances of ill-health or otherwise overtaking our friend at Paul's Work, or of anything coming in the way of these operations being smoothly conducted, and we have no doubt

you will consider it prudent in us to state our views on the subject.

"The current bills of the nature alluded to amount just now to about £20,000. With the kindest wishes that men can have to do everything for you that it is in their power to do, we beg respectfully to state that, if at all possible, during the next six months a considerable reduction should take place in this amount; it is too large to go round with comfort; it is attended with risks and annoyances, and is expensive.

"We have not a doubt that you will agree with us in all this; to reduce the amount would enhance the name and respectability of all the parties.

"Perhaps it may be well to give you a view[1] of what are current at 1st September, which we now do on the other side. August is provided for, and we shall therefore

[1] The view alluded to is as follows:—

	1823.		
Sums due in Septr.		£3,148	14 0
,,	Octr.	4,537	17 4
,,	Nov.	5,364	17 10
,,	Decr.	5,349	10 0
	1824.		
Sums due in Jany,		2,194	14 0
,,	Feb.	840	0 0
		£21,435	13 2
,,	Augt.	2,911	12 0
		3,000	0 0
		£27,347	5 2

£21,435	13 2	
3,000	0 0	June, Sept., Decr. 1824.
£24,435	13 2	

start at 1st September, the amount at which date appears to be £21,435, 15s. 2d. We shall suppose there is a part of this sum unused by Mr. Ballantyne, say £1435, 15s. 2d., leaving a floating sum in the hands of the banks of £20,000.

"From what the writer of this knows of Mr. Ballantyne's matters, there will be a reduction up to 1st October of say £1500, there being very little to do in September, but at 1st October the current sum will be £18,500 or thereby.

"If by persevering reduction this sum could be brought down to £8000 or £10,000, everything would move comfortably and easily; but it must be apparent to your own excellent understanding that the sums in October, November, and December are very large. The work now in progress would assist very considerably, and we would suggest that, if in your power, it should appear early in November; if its successor were to appear in February or March a farther sum will come in, and we might say that in December or January a new contract might come into play, and with these operations the whole thing exhibit a more moderate appearance.

"Such, Sir Walter, are the views we have taken of these matters. We have stated them broadly to you; we have thought it prudent to do so. Till October there is nothing to give you or us any uneasiness, but after that the sums are large and numerous, and will require prudence and foresight in the management.—We are, etc.,

"A. C. AND CO."

A day having been fixed for a meeting at Abbotsford,

my father found it necessary to postpone it in consequence of the illness of Mrs. Constable, and on the 20th August he writes :—

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I am sorry that sickness in my family will prevent my leaving home as I proposed, and I cannot therefore have the pleasure of waiting upon you at Abbotsford to-morrow, but I can communicate further with you on the subject of my letter of the 17th, and talk over the subject as may be agreeable to you, when we next meet.

"Mrs. Constable was rather seriously ill last week—got better, and has been indisposed again since Sunday.—I am, etc., A. C.

"*P.S.*—I have sent twenty-six additional tracts on Witchcraft per coach. The interleaved copy of Shakespeare will be forwarded this week."

Sir Walter replied as follows :—

"ABBOTSFORD, 21*st August* 1823.

"DEAR SIR,—I am very sorry at the disappointment of to-day, still more at the cause. I hope Mrs. Constable's health will be soon re-established. There is much may be better said than written upon our matters; not that the essential part cannot be as well expressed on paper, but a personal interview between friends leads them more perfectly to understand the tone of feeling on which the resolution rests. The first question I should candidly have asked you was, whether the cause of your present correspondence arose merely out of the extent of those pecuniary transactions which I am as desirous as you to

abridge, or whether the deficiency of the sale of Quentin Durward has diminished your general confidence in this sort of literature, and inclined you to restrict on all points our hitherto very extensive concerns? Do not suppose me selfish enough to be vexed or angry if the latter should be the case; and pray be candid and speak it out at once. I cannot expect, and do not wish, you to bestow the capital your skill and industry have acquired upon that which does not promise profit; nor do I think that, because our former intercourse has been lucrative, I have acquired, or would wish to exercise, any right to put my hand into your pocket deeper than you desire. You observe that very different arrangements must be thought upon in these two different cases. I will not deny that I sincerely wish that your letters may bear the *full* meaning of your present correspondence; because, though I should not be surprised, yet I should be sorry that there was a deeper cause lurked in your mind than that which you have assigned.

"On the subject of the accommodations—supposing that the only subject of discussion between us—I would have shown you my own calculations for reducing them, the operations of which have been only postponed by the delay of publishing this new affair—a delay which shall cease immediately, as I have finished Mr. Napier's article, which proved a tougher piece of work than I expected.[1]

"When that affair is published, say in the end of October, I will have £4000 of bills instantly, and if you incline to contract for another work as hitherto, I shall have be-

[1] The Essay on "Romance."

tween £7000 and £8000. Out of this sum I have no occasion whatever for more than about £1200, which I wish to pay an old debt with; but even this is not pressing. The application of £6500 of these receipts to the floating balance would bring down the accommodations to £12,000, and I could easily reduce it within the space of the next three months to £8000 or £10,000, the sum mentioned in your letter. You mentioned to me that an accommodation of £5000 could be had, and such might be used, in whole or in part, to turn into cash the long-dated bills which I mentioned, accruing to me on the publication of St. Ronan's. I have no debts here of the least annoyance, my land being almost all paid for. My house is also so far cleared, as I have paid £4000 to account, and my personal income, free of interests, etc., is amply sufficient for my own expenses; besides which, most of my land is let, or will be let, next Whitsunday. If you had been here I should have had no reluctance to confide to you the most minute particulars of my own affairs, and show you that, with moderate deductions for certain purposes, I propose that the whole produce of my literary labours shall go to extinguish these accommodations, which have accumulated far beyond my wish. If you think these explanations and this plan of proceeding satisfactory, you will let me know. If the grounds of the anxiety you have expressed be deeper, I shall be no less desirous to know them; and I entreat you, for the sake of all concerned, to be explicit on the subject, and to rely that whatever further courses we may either of us think of adopting, my efforts to fulfil all existing engagements will be as zealous

as ever.—I am, in haste to save post, dear Constable, very truly yours, WALTER SCOTT.

"I thought it better to write thus explicitly without delay. It is putting something off both our minds. When Mrs. Constable's health will permit, we will be happy to see you here, to talk affairs more fully over. You are quite at liberty to show this to Mr. Cadell. I should be sorry he thought I was acting unwisely in my own affairs or in yours. In saying I receive £4000, I count only on making about £2200 or £2300 effectual, because there are expenses of print and paper to repay out of the gross sum."

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"EDINBURGH, 22*d August* 1823.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I am greatly obliged by your kind letter, which I have just received, and in reply I can at once assure you that I entertain no fears of any kind on the subject of the literary plans and undertakings in which my house is fortunately engaged with you, and it will unquestionably afford myself and my partner the greatest satisfaction to do all things and everything within our command which you can desire in continuing and extending the number of them. It was no dread of failure in these matters, conducted as they hitherto have been, which induced our present correspondence; the motives were entirely confined to the extent of the money transactions, and the expense and contingencies unavoidably connected with them, and, I may also add, the great anxiety

I have long had to see your high name entirely free from the botheration of mercantile affairs.

"A sum of £8000 or £10,000 could, I have no doubt, be managed with comfort; and to reduce the transactions to that amount every facility in the power of this house will be afforded; indeed, the matter is equally important on both sides, and I have no doubt will be prudently set right. Had it been in my power to have left home yesterday, and to have waited on you at Abbotsford, there were some plans connected with our money transactions which I would have taken the liberty of laying before you, and whenever it is altogether suitable to your engagements, nothing could afford me more pleasure than to go to you on the subject; in the meantime, I am fully sensible of the kind manner in which you received what has just passed.—I am, etc., A. C."

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND CO.

"ABBOTSFORD, 23*d August* 1823.

"GENTLEMEN,—I am duly favoured with your letter, and adverting to the statement you there made, I quite agree with you in the propriety of abridging those transactions which are founded on accommodation. With this purpose I have adopted and maintained a system of retrenchment, which has reduced £6000 since April last, as will appear from your books. I propose to have this present work out of hand by the end of October, and propose you should then contract for another on the same terms, the money to be applied to retire the same value of accommodation-bills. I shall have at the same time the com-

mand of about £4000, long-dated bills, which may go to the same purpose, as far as they can be discounted, and betwixt these two resources I imagine there will be little difficulty in clearing off £6000 or thereabouts at Martinmas; and such being the case, the sum will be brought down to £12,000, and I have little doubt of bringing it entirely within your bounds (indeed, very much within them) by Whitsunday. I look forward to this without the least doubt or shadow of anxiety; only, if Mr. Constable's experience and knowledge of these matters can suggest any mode of bringing over £4000 or £5000 till Whitsunday, it would save expense or even the probability of inconvenience. I mentioned to Mr. Constable in a private letter that I might need about £1200 or £1400 to pay off some of the very little personal debts that remain due by me; but should that sum impede the operation of our scheme of retrenchment too much, it must lie over.

"I hope we understand each other perfectly, and am in haste, Gentlemen, your obedient servant,

"WALTER SCOTT."

MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND CO. TO SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"*27th August* 1823.

"DEAR SIR,—We were yesterday favoured with your esteemed letter of the 23d inst., and are happy to find that it is your determination to have the work (now at press) ready in October, in excellent time for publication, which in important respects would answer all purposes.

"The reductions of the bills already alluded to will be attended with mutual advantage. It can be done gradu-

ally, and to suit your wishes or arrangements, and we shall most readily agree to the contract you propose on the completion of St. Ronan's.

"We shall arrange with Mr. Ballantyne for the months that appear heavy, and in a way to make matters as light to him as possible. Perhaps October may be done much in the usual way, and more force can be applied to the following months, when the busy season commences, and returns can be more surely calculated on. We shall try also to manage at as long dates as possible to avoid renewals.

"With regard to the sum you mention for a private purpose, we hope you will not hesitate a moment in doing in it what will be agreeable to yourself. The sum is not worth your giving yourself any uneasiness about while we are at hand. Besides St. Ronan's and the new bargain, Mr. Constable may be able to obtain a few thousands for a few months; but he would look forward to the pleasure of a personal communication on the subject. In the meantime our operations can be conducted on the more ready means.—We remain, etc. A. C. AND CO."

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"*Friday, 29th August* 1823.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—I received your letter last week, and need not say that it was entirely satisfactory. I have now got so well forwarded at the printers' that I have my time under my own command, so that I will be delighted to see you any day next week which will best suit you, Monday excepted. I hope Mrs. Constable's

health will be no longer any objection to this trip, which will do you good, besides the business we have to transact together.

"There are two books I wish much to have—Recollections on the Peninsula, and The Sexagenarian, 1816.

"I have to thank you for a most splendid collection of Witches, which I trust to turn to good accompt. Shakespeare arrived safe.—Yours truly, W. SCOTT."

My father visited Abbotsford in the first week of September, and on the 25th September wrote to Sir Walter from Edinburgh as follows:—

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—On looking into the memorandum of acceptances for October, I find the amount for which A. C. and Co. are under acceptance to be £4537, 17s. 4d., and the amount of contra acceptances of J. B. and Co. £4408, 8s., in following sums and dates:—

	A. C. and Co. have to pay—				J. B. and Co. have to pay—		
Oct.	3, to J. B. and Co.,	£781	14	0	£749	18	0
,,	10, to Sir W. S.,	750	0	0	750	0	0
,,	14, to do.	840	0	0	800	0	0
,,	23, to do.	833	6	8	803	10	0
,,	30, to do.	833	6	8	805	0	0
,,	30, to do.	500	0	0	500	0	0
		£4537	17	4	£4408	8	0

"There is a difference of £129, 9s. 4d. against A. C. and Co., but that amount will be balanced by sums due in November and December.

"Now, what I beg respectfully to submit to you in regard to renewals for these sums is this—

"A. C. and Co. have to provide £4537, 17s. 4d., of which I would propose carrying on £3150 thus—

Say 10 Septr.	5 months' date,	. . .	£787	10	0
10 „	6 months' date,	. . .	787	10	0
10 „	7 months' date,	. . .	787	10	0
10 „	8 months' date,	. . .	787	10	0
			£3150	0	0

and that you should draw these from Abbotsford, discounting all at once yourself without the interference of any other party. I have no doubt you would have only to ask Sir W. Forbes and Co. the question to get the money, which you could apply during October, as J. B. and Co.'s acceptances were to provide for. The difference between £3150 and £4408, 8s. would be made up by payments from A. C. and Co. to account of the £3000 long bills done in London. There would be many advantages to the credit of both concerns from this plan, if you find it agreeable to adopt it.

"The new bargain would come in to assist you with the November payments, which are heavy—ours £5364, 19s. 10d., yours £5623, 17s. 6d. With regard to that month, I would suggest your drawing again in your own name for whatever was required, payable in London, and I have no doubt Messrs. Coutts and Co. would give the cash for them. . . . . I am, etc. etc.,

"A. CONSTABLE."

CHAPTER XIV.

William Laidlaw and St. Ronan's Well—Critique by Sydney Smith—Redgauntlet—The *Variorums*—Letter from my father, with Sir Walter's reply, accompanying Cribb, a Dandy Dinmont terrier, and requiring genealogical information—My father's reply—Letter to Sir Walter, with books and articles for the Museum at Abbotsford—Letters from Sir Walter Scott; he sends Epilogue on Queen Mary—Letter from my father—Death of his daughter Catherine.

IT is to William Laidlaw that the public owes a Scottish subject chosen for the next of Sir Walter's wonderful creations; and although perhaps there is not one of these with regard to which opinion more widely varied, the verdict of the highest critical authorities was always favourable to St. Ronan's Well. Sydney Smith writes as follows after reading it:—

"*December* 28, 1823, FOSTON, YORK.

"DEAR SIR,—Many thanks for St. Ronan, by far the best that has appeared for some time,—I mean the best of Sir Walter's, and therefore, of course, better than all others. Every now and then there is some mistaken and overcharged humour—but much excellent delineation of character,—the story very well told, and the whole very interesting. Lady Binks, the old landlady, and Touchwood are all very good. Mrs. Blower particularly so. So are MacTurk and Lady Penelope. I wish he would give his people better names: Sir Bingo Binks is quite ridicu-

lous. I was very glad to find Dryasdust and Meg Merrilies excluded; one was never good, and the other too often good. The curtain should have dropt on finding Clara's glove. Some of the serious scenes with Clara and her brother are very fine,—the knife scene masterly. In her light and gay moments Clara is very vulgar; but Sir Walter always fails in well-bred men and women,—and yet, who has seen more of both? and who in the ordinary intercourse of society is better bred? Upon the whole, I call this a very successful exhibition. I hope you are rich, healthy, and thinner.—Yours truly,

"SYDNEY SMITH."

St. Ronan's Well was published in December 1823, and immediately after its conclusion Sir Walter began another novel. The title originally intended for this work, Mr. Lockhart tells us, was "Herries," but that by the advice of his publisher and printer he was induced to adopt that of Redgauntlet. It would appear from the following passage in a letter from my father to Mr. Cadell (Sept. 9, 1823) that a more startling name had once been thought of:—"I went to Abbotsford on Saturday after twelve o'clock, and returned early yesterday. I found Sir Walter in the best health, and in no respect offended with me, or at our late correspondence; and what passed on the occasion was calculated, I hope, to do no harm, but to cement and add to the stability of our future dealings. St. Ronan's advances, and the next after it is already chalked out; it is to contain *the Goblins*, and to be called 'The Witch,'—the materials for which, in his extraordinary head, are very abundant."

Mr. Lockhart thus alludes to the fact that, contrary to custom, Redgauntlet was the only novel of 1824 :—

"This year—*mirabile dictu!*—produced but one novel; and it is not impossible that the author had taken deeply into his mind, though he would not *immediately* act upon them, certain hints about the danger of 'overcropping,' which had been alluded to as dropping from his publishers in 1823. He had, however, a labour of some weight to go through in preparing for the press a Second Edition of his voluminous Swift. The additions to this reprint were numerous, and he corrected his notes and the Life of the Dean throughout, with considerable care."[1]

The following letter from Sir Walter to my father acknowledges the gift of a set of *Variorum* Classics :—

"ABBOTSFORD, *6th January* 1824.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Yesterday I had the great pleasure of placing in my provisional library the most splendid present, as I sincerely believe, which ever an author received from a bookseller, in the shape of the inimitable Variorums. Who knows what new ideas the classics may suggest? for I am determined to shake off the rust which years have contracted, and to read at least some of the most capital of the ancients before I die. Believe me, my dear and old friend, I set a most special value on this work as coming from you, and as being a pledge that the long and confidential intercourse betwixt us has been agreeable and advantageous to both.

"I come to town on Monday, and will take an early opportunity of seeing how the new year comes in with you; that it may begin with the prospect of renewed health and strength is the sincere wish of, dear Constable, yours always truly, WALTER SCOTT."

[1] See Life, vol. v. p. 320. Redgauntlet was published in June 1824.

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"3 PARK PLACE, *January 16th*, 1824.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I am sorry I had not the honour of seeing you when you were so kind as make inquiry for me here on Monday. I have been recommended by my medical advisers to see as few of my friends as possible; if I had been aware of your return to Edinburgh, I should have taken the liberty of requesting that you might be admitted, as it would be a high gratification to me to have half-an-hour's conversation; and whenever you find it agreeable, any day after twelve o'clock, you would oblige me much by favouring me with an opportunity.

"With regard to my health, I really have been very ill, as I shall explain to you. I hope I am under favourable treatment, and likely to recover, though, I confess, my own expectations are not very great. Among the many things I had to think of in our important intercourse, there were one or two not so complete as I could have wished, particularly the bargain about Shakespeare, which we must get put in form.

"I have never received the MSS. which were in Lord Kinnedder's possession. I wished to treat that matter with the delicacy which the nature of it and my respect for our late worthy friend required, but I fear this may have gone so far as to lead some of the parties concerned to a conclusion of my little anxiety about them. I had the honour of delivering your letter to Mr. Guthrie Wright on the subject, and I afterwards applied to Mr. Alexander Young, who, I found, was Lord K.'s executor,

but he was unwilling to interfere till Mr. Erskine should arrive from Prince of Wales' Island. On hearing of Mr. E.'s return, I made several unsuccessful attempts at seeing him; he was either from home or in the country, and I lately addressed a letter to him requesting possession of the MSS., but with as little success, he being now in London.

"I need not say how anxious I am to get those MSS. to place them along with the others, and have thought it proper to state the circumstances to you, in the confidence of your assisting me in the acquisition, or at all events to satisfy you, that their not being already in my hands does not arise from any remissness on my part in obtaining those invaluable treasures.—I am, etc.,

"A. C."

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, 29*th March* 1824.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—Since I received your letter I have been on the look-out for a companion for you, and have now the pleasure to send one bred at Abbotsford, of a famous race. His name has hitherto been Cribb, but you may change it if you please. I will undertake for his doing execution upon the rats, which Polton was well stocked with when I knew it some seventeen or eighteen years ago. You must take some trouble to attach Mr. Cribb, otherwise he will form low connexions in the kitchen, which are not easily broken off. The best and most effectual way is to feed him yourself for a few days.

"I congratulate you heartily, my good old friend, on your look forward to domestic walks and a companion

of this sort; and I have no doubt your health will gradually be confirmed by it. I will take an early opportunity to see you when we return to Edinburgh. I like the banks of the Esk, which to me are full of many remembrances, among which those relating to poor Leyden must come home to you as well as to me. I am ringing in my improvements—painting my baronial hall with all the scutcheons of the Border clans, and many similar devices. For the roof-tree I tried to blazon my own quarterings, and succeeded easily with eight on my father's side; but on my mother's side I stuck fast at the mother of my great-great-grandfather. The ancestor himself was John Rutherford of Grundisnock, which is an appanage of the Hunthill estate, and he was married to Isabel Ker of Bloodylaws. I think I have heard that either this John of Grundisnock or his father was one of the nine sons of the celebrated Cock of Hunthill, who seems to have had a reasonable brood of chickens. Do you know anything of the pedigree of the Hunthills? The Earl of Teviot was of a younger branch, Rutherford of Quarrelholes, but of the same family. If I could find out these Rutherfords and who they married, I could complete my tree, which is otherwise correct; but if not, I will paint clouds on these three shields, with the motto *Vixerunt fortes ante.* These things are trifles when correct, but very absurd and contemptible if otherwise. Edgerstane cannot help me; he only knows that my grandfather was a cousin of his—and you know he represents Hunthill. My poor mother has often told me about it, but it was to regardless ears. Would to God I had old Mrs. Keddie of Leith, who

screeded off all the alliances between the Andersons of Ettrick House and the Andersons of Ettrick Hall, though Michael was the name of every second man, and, to complete the mess, they intermarried with each other.—Yours truly, WALTER SCOTT."

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"POLTON, BY LASSWADE, 16*th April* 1824.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I had the honour of receiving your last kind letter some days previously to my removing here. I thank you most heartily for Cribb, who promises to be everything I could wish. I could have desired to have made a monopoly of his attentions, but the bairns will not allow this. The little cur is already a favourite with everybody.

"I have been thinking of the Hunthills; it would appear there is some dispute as to the representative of that ancient family. I have not at present the opportunity of consulting Wood's Peerage, but I fancy the genealogies are pretty fully detailed there. I have borrowed two books from my son, which I have the pleasure of sending for your perusal. The first edition of The Moores Baffled, with Hollar's cuts, is extremely rare. The reprint by Lord Rutherfurd contains a brief genealogy of the Rutherfurds at the end of it, and may probably afford you some hints. I suppose the Rutherfurd who sold Hunthill had been the representative of the family. He had been in the army, and resided, some twenty-five years ago, near Currie, in the neighbourhood of Edinburgh. He left a family. His wife was a Miss

Edgar, daughter of Mr. Edgar of the Excise. I remember the younger brother of this Captain Rutherfurd, a clerk in the Custom-house, where, I believe, he still is.

"From Mr. Rutherfurd, as heir of old Beau Lauder of Carrol-side, to whom he was nearly related, I purchased, some time about the year 1797-98, Carrol-side's library after his death. It was in that collection I found the Family Bible of your ancestors the Haliburtons of Newmains, which I have frequently mentioned to you as containing a MS. pedigree of the family. I sold this Bible to a London bookseller, and have repeatedly made fruitless inquiries after it. Some fortunate incident may, however, perhaps lead us, at a future day, to its present destination. It was Barker's edition, in black-letter, printed early in the seventeenth century.

"On the subject of this Captain Rutherfurd, I have still something farther to mention. He is heir of entail to the estate of Dean, and raised a process against the present Sir John Nisbett, with a view to bastardize him, in which he did not succeed. Sir John's mother was his father's mistress, but the acknowledgment of her as Lady Nisbett in Scotland was proved by many witnesses. I am not sure whether the papers in this process do not contain something concerning the Rutherfurds of Hunthill. It was in the Court of Session some time between 1793 and '99. The proof was a very bulky paper, and contained many curious things. I remember being much amused with the evidence of an old lady, Mrs. Hamilton of Pencaitland. It might be worth your while, perhaps, to look into this process. Mr. Balderston, W.S., was Sir

John's agent, and I have no doubt the whole papers will be in the hands of Mr. William Scott, W.S., the late John Scott's son. I fear you will think this tedious kind of gossip, but I trouble you with it with the less compunction, as affording some evidence that I am now so well as to be able to think and divert myself about old stories.

"I have got a very excellent residence here. You know its situation to be particularly interesting from its vicinity to Roslin and Hawthornden. A certain spot on the opposite bank (which at a future day will be eagerly inquired after) brings daily to my remembrance a visit which, along with John Leyden, I had the honour of paying you fully more than twenty years ago.

"I hear from headquarters that literary matters continue to thrive. I live in the hope of being yet able to assist their progress, but I am here in quiet in the meantime, and, considering how ill I was so very lately, my convalescence looks to myself as if magic had been employed in effecting it. I send you a parcel from worthy Peter Coxe, brother of the Archdeacon. If you have occasion to pay him for his book, which is most beautifully embellished, I shall be glad to take charge of that matter for you. You will also receive a small volume, *Castellum Huttonicum*, written by Mr. George Todd, the intelligent bookseller at York.—I am, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"POLTON, *7th September* 1824.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I have the pleasure of sending

you a copy of Mr. Dibdin's Library Companion, in which there is some amusement, but I do not think of the useful kind that might have been expected. You will also receive three volumes of Letters illustrative of English History, published from the originals by Mr. Ellis of the British Museum,—extremely curious and well edited. I hope we may have more from the same source. These are the only things which, during my recent short stay, I thought likely to interest you, and I did not see any articles of the olden time much worthy of notice. Rare books appear to be rising in price, and the number of collectors greater than ever. I met with valuable tracts of Italian Poetry, with the autograph of Drummond of Hawthornden, which, on its arrival, I shall send for your inspection. I got home on Saturday, after an agreeable, and, I trust, not an unproductive journey, with my health still in an improving state. Mrs. Constable and Miss White were somewhat unwell at York, which detained me three days there. This, however, enabled me to make an excursion to Sheriff Hutton Castle—the magnificent ruin, in which the apartment is still shown where Elizabeth of York, mother of our Margaret,[1] was imprisoned in the time of Richard III. I also saw a fine collection of pictures at Mr. Thomson's, Sheriff Hutton Park, in which were several of Holbein, Vandyke, etc., and among many others an original portrait of Ben Jonson.

"A friend in London was so good as give me for your Museum some relics recently brought from Peru, found in the tomb of one of the Incas. By this time I expect

[1] Margaret, the Queen of James IV.

the box containing them will have reached Abbotsford. When your engagements allow with perfect convenience, I shall be very happy to wait upon you,—and I am, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, *Saturday, 19th Sept.* 1824.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—The books yesterday received are most welcome, and quite in my way. The Mexican curiosities came safe, and I am at some loss to guess what kind friend has remembered my hobby here; only I expected *you* to be the benevolent fairy. Last week our house was quite full, but our visitors have now left, or are leaving us; so if Mrs. Constable and you, with Miss White, can come, any day you please, we will be most happy to see you all. My mighty works are, I think, now completed; and such has been the curiosity of tourists that I am obliged to shut my doors against all but friends, otherwise we should not have a moment's quiet. In the hope of seeing you one day soon, I am very truly yours, WALTER SCOTT."

THE SAME to THE SAME.

"ABBOTSFORD, 22*d Oct.* 1824.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—I recovered the above[1] with great difficulty. I believe it was never spoken, but written for some play, afterwards withdrawn, in which Mrs. Henry Siddons was to have spoken in the character of Queen Mary. It is at your service, if you think it worth while to insert it.

[1] Epilogue on Queen Mary.

"I am anxious to see Medwin's account of Lord Byron, which seems to be as authentic as such recollections can be, though full of inaccuracies from imperfect remembrance or communication. One always looks to what concerns themselves. He says very truly that I received much instruction from poor Mat Lewis; but it related almost entirely to the rhymes, in which he was greatly superior, and to the structure and versification, for which the poor monk had a most excellent ear. He wrote no part of The Fire King, which I finished in one evening after dinner, with Heber and Leyden sitting beside me. Nor do I think he ever helped me to a line, save one in which I made a false quantity, rendering Jŭlў, Jūly. But poor Mat wrote many better things. I will send the autograph of the Epilogue to David, the secretary,[1] to reclaim an old promise.

"Farewell, my good friend; I hope this will find you well.—I am truly yours, WALTER SCOTT."

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"POLTON HOUSE, *5th Novr.* 1824.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—The communication of the Epilogue has conferred a particular favour on me, and as such will be felt also by Hurst and Robinson. It is beautiful, and with your permission I would wish to include it in the octavo edition of the Poetical Works now going to press.

"Capt. Medwin's Conversations of Lord Byron, from the

[1] The Secretary of the Bannatyne Club was the invaluable David Laing, LL.D., whose treasury of knowledge is an open book of reference to all who need to be informed on any subject.

extracts in the newspapers, appears curious, and, I should think, on the whole as faithful as such a work can be expected to be. I cannot help being amused with what is said of the most nervous of 'God's Booksellers;' in some respects this nervous gentleman could be matched, in others I fancy it would be difficult to find his parallel; it will be regretted that some of the occurrences referred to should be doomed to such permanent record; on the other hand, it displays many traits of honourable character to which it will not be questioned Lord Byron was well entitled.

"I have sent you in a parcel by the coach the relic I mentioned formerly from Jonson's Willow—it is a part of one of the branches struck off by lightning some years ago —and along with it the Adventures of John Daniel, an odd book, with a letter from your old correspondent, Henry White. Your collection of *Diablerie* is very extensive, but I lately picked up what I expect will prove an addition to it—The Devil's Cloven Foot, by John Bowdler, printed at Bristol above an hundred years ago.

"My health has been very good till within the last few days, when I have had a slight rheumatic attack, just, I hope, to remind me how careful I ought to be in cold weather,—I am, etc., ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

On the 28th December 1824 my father suffered severe affliction by the death of a much-loved child, his daughter Catherine, at the age of fourteen years. She had always been intellectually precocious, and the tenderness of her heart was as remarkable as the brightness of her mind.

If my father had a favourite among his children it was she, and his love was fondly returned. I shall never forget their parting on the morning when with a devoted sister she left Polton, never to return,—it was indeed my own first sorrow, to be parted thus from the constant companion of my childhood.

Catherine fell a victim to consumption. She died at Clapham, under the tender care of her eldest brother and sister; but though her father had the comfort of knowing that she was tenderly cherished to the last, and was quite resigned to die, he never ceased to mourn, and the thought of rejoining her was in his mind on the morning of the day on which he died.

CHAPTER XV.

The Encyclopædia for Youth—Letters on the subject to Sir Walter Scott and Mr. Sydney Smith, with Mr. Smith's reply—"Constable's Miscellany"—Letter from Mr. Lockhart regarding it and a *variorum* Shakespeare by Mr. Gifford—My father expounds at Abbotsford his scheme of "The Miscellany"—Mr. Lockhart's version of the scene—My father and not Sir Walter Scott the suggester of a Life of Napoleon—Mr. Lockhart anent "Miscellany"—The Tales of the Crusaders, letter from my father—Sir Walter Scott visits Ireland; Letters from Mr. Lockhart and Sir Walter.

ONE of the projects that my father at this time had in view was the Encyclopædia for Youth, in which of course he looked for the co-operation of Sir Walter Scott, and in the following letter, dated Polton, 23d February 1825, he suggested a few congenial subjects:[1]—

[1] To the Reverend Sydney Smith my father also wrote on the same subject on the 7th February 1825. I give the following extract from his letter, with Mr. Smith's characteristic reply:—

"I expect to commence printing in May first, and to complete the whole within eighteen months from that time; the materials being only required gradually, but acceptable as soon as they can be furnished. In regard to the pecuniary remuneration, one pound for each printed page has been considered as the rate for contributions of the first class, in which I trust I may be permitted the honour of adding your name; at any rate, I am sure you will forgive the freedom of my troubling you with these details.

"You have been so kind as to inquire after my health, which has for the last four years been very indifferent; but I am thankful to say I am very well at present, and able once more to attend my former calling, and look forward to the pleasure at a future day to remind you of your promise that I should one day publish your works in folio, or in any other size suitable to the taste of the times; but we shall

"POLTON, 23 *Feby.* 1825.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I have not mentioned anything to you lately of my plan of the Encyclopædia for Youth, from a wish of not plaguing more than can be avoided; but I have been arranging for the materials, and I hope successfully. Dr. Greville promises to make an excellent

keep to the folio if you insist upon it. This will convince you that I am not entirely unmindful of the good you predicted me some three-and-twenty years ago. Much of it has been realized; and the evil which you threatened should be entirely mine, the *Pillory*, I have fortunately escaped. It would be more gratifying to me than I shall trouble you by expressing at present, to have an opportunity of rendering you an account of our literary doings here, and I shall certainly next time I go south take the liberty of paying my respects to you at Foston.—I am, with the utmost respect, dear Sir, yours, etc.,

"ARCHD. CONSTABLE."

MR. SMITH to MR. CONSTABLE.

"FOSTON, *March* 3, 1825.

"DEAR SIR,—I think the plan of the proposed work and the choice of the editor very good, and likely to succeed. I am very sorry, however, that my occupations here (which, though frivolous, are still necessary and numerous) will prevent me from becoming a contributor. It will have my good wishes, however, if it has not my lucubrations, and the first are perhaps of more value than the last.

"I am very glad my predictions of your success are verified. I have hardly had fair-play respecting the Pillory, as it was abolished so long before your decease. Had it been otherwise, I think the reviewers would have seen you in the wood; and I have often heard Mr. Jeffrey and Mr. Murray say (though I know they have both a great regard for you) that they should probably be led away in that case by the example of the mob, and that they could not avoid indulging in an egg or two. Mr. Brougham, with his accustomed acuteness, suggested that decayed eggs would answer the purpose as well as fresh ones. This was the waggish way in which in former days we used to make merry with our publisher.

"I still maintain a partiality for the folio form, so expect no other! I shall be very glad to see you in your way to or from the south.—I remain, dear Sir, yours very truly, SYDNEY SMITH."

editor of the work, and all my literary friends to whom I have yet applied agree to support it. Miss Edgeworth, with whom you were so kind as use influence in my behalf, is of the distinguished number.

"I now take the liberty of enclosing a list of the proposed contents. I must not look for much of your aid. I hope, however, if leisure permits, you might find a pleasure in preparing a few short articles on familiar topics, such as the following, which I would use the freedom to suggest:—

"The Spanish Armada—Sir Andrew Barton—Lord Byron—Bannockburn—Bruce, King Robert—Charles I. of England, as a Prince of fine taste and great misfortune—Drummond of Hawthornden—Guy, Earl of Warwick—Mary Queen of Scots—Dr. Archibald Pitcairn—Isaac Walton.

"The work will go to press in about three months, and be completed, I expect, within two years. I have the pleasure to send you a delightful specimen of the first sheet of Shakespeare.—Yours, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

The grand scheme, however, that now chiefly engaged my father's attention was his "Miscellany," undoubtedly the pioneer and suggester of all the various "Libraries" which sprang up in its wake, and which, after the inspiration and management of its projector had been withdrawn, may be said to have run it down. It extended, however, to seventy-six volumes, and I believe is admitted on the whole to be equal in literary excellence and interest to any similar collection yet given to the public.

The following letter from Mr. Lockhart to my father alludes to it, and to the edition of Shakespeare, which, in conjunction with his father-in-law, he had agreed to edit:—

"GERMISTOUN, GLASGOW, *May* 5, 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I suppose you have ere this time heard from Sir Walter, but in case you have not, I can do no great harm by mentioning that when I told your plan to him, he said it seemed to him to be *by far* the best he had heard of. His words I think were, 'This is the cleverest thing that ever came into that cleverest of all bibliopolic heads.' I trust you will one day have good reason to congratulate yourself on this magnificent conception, and shall certainly think it a fine day that witnesses the execution of it begun.

"By the way, I suppose you must print these books, if not even the Novels themselves, henceforth in Paris. I don't think even you are—certainly no one else is—sufficiently interested by the proposed changes as to the duty on exported books. If it goes on, certainly Ballantyne, and Davison and Co., may turn off half their hands. Indeed, I hear some of your brethren in London have already made prospective arrangements, on a large scale, with the Didots, and John Smith here has collected some curious materials about these matters. I wish much he would print them in some shape ere the Act passes.

"What is this announcement of a *variorum* Shakespeare from Mr. Gifford? It is very unfortunate if two such works come out about the same time, and there can be no doubt that he must have a great deal of valuable matter

to produce. However, he has been ten years about Ford and Shirley, and I daresay he will never see a Shakespeare out, even if he lives ten years more. For the rest, it is perhaps a mere trick of some professional *envieux*, and at the worst he will scarcely match our *prolegomena*. I shall however be anxious to hear what Mr. Cadell says as to this business, from London, and will call on you when I get back to Edinburgh, in the beginning of the week.—Yours, etc., J. G. LOCKHART."

The occasion at Abbotsford a few days later, when my father's great project was fully explained to Sir Walter, to his son-in-law, and Mr. Ballantyne, has been very graphically delineated by Mr. Lockhart in his Life of Sir Walter Scott. There is a good deal that naturally is distasteful to my filial reverence in his familiar treatment of a man whose genius he acknowledged, and towards whom when in presence he was accustomed to behave with marked respect; but Mr. Lockhart's contempt for a dead lion was complete, and his narrative is perhaps mainly true. I shall give it in his own words:[1]—

"Sir Walter considered his publisher's new plans worthy of very ample deliberation. Constable now opened them in fulness of detail, and explained his views in a manner that might well excite admiration, not unmixed with alarm. Constable was meditating nothing less than a total revolution in the art and traffic of bookselling; and the exulting and blazing fancy with which he expanded and embellished his visions of success, hitherto undreamt of in the philosophy of the trade, might almost have induced serious suspicions of his sanity, but for the curious accumulation of pregnant facts on which he rested his justification, and the dexterous sagacity with which he uncoiled his practical

[1] See Life, vol. vi. pp. 28-32.

inferences. He startled us at the outset by saying, 'Literary genius may, or may not, have done its best; but printing and bookselling, as instruments for enlightening and entertaining mankind, and, of course, for making money, are as yet in mere infancy. Yes, the trade are in their cradle.' Scott eyed the florid bookseller's beaming countenance, and the solemn stare with which the equally portly printer was listening, and pushing round the bottles with a hearty chuckle, bade me 'Give our twa *sonsie babbies* a drap mother's milk.' Constable sucked in fresh inspiration, and proceeded to say that, wild as we might think him, his new plans had been suggested by, and were in fact mainly grounded upon, a sufficiently prosaic authority—namely, the annual schedule of assessed taxes, a copy of which interesting document he drew from his pocket, and substituted for his *D'Oyley*. It was copiously diversified, text and margent, by figures and calculations in his own handwriting, which I for one might have regarded with less reverence had I known at the time this great arithmetician's rooted aversion and contempt for all examination of his own balance-sheet.

"His lecture on these columns and ciphers was, however, as profound as ingenious. He had taken vast pains to fill in the number of persons who might fairly be supposed to pay the taxes for each separate article of luxury; and his conclusion was, that the immense majority of British families endowed with liberal fortunes, had never yet conceived the remotest idea that their domestic arrangements were incomplete, unless they expended some considerable sum annually upon the purchase of books. 'Take,' said he, 'this one absurd and contemptible *item* of the tax on hair-powder; the use of it is almost entirely gone out of fashion. Bating a few parsons' and lawyers' wigs, it may be said that hair-powder is confined to *flunkeys*, and indeed to the livery-servants of great and splendid houses exclusively; nay, in many even of these it is already quite laid aside. Nevertheless, for each head that is thus vilified in Great Britain, a guinea is paid yearly to the Exchequer; and the taxees in that schedule are an army, compared to the purchasers of even the best and most popular of books.' He went on in the same vein about armorial bearings, hunters, racers, and four-wheeled carriages; and having demonstrated that hundreds of thousands in this magnificent country held, as necessary to their personal comfort, and the maintenance of decent station, articles upon articles of costly elegance, of which their forefathers never dreamt, said that on the whole, however usual it was to talk of the extended scale of literary transactions in modern days, our self-love never deceived us more grossly than when we fancied our notions as to the matter of

books had advanced in at all a corresponding proportion. 'On the contrary,' cried Constable, 'I am satisfied that the demand for Shakespeare's plays, contemptible as we hold it to have been, in the time of Elizabeth and James, was more creditable to the classes who really indulged in any sort of elegance then, than the sale of Childe Harold or Waverley, triumphantly as people talk, is to the alleged expansion of taste and intelligence in this nineteenth century.'

"Scott helped him on by interposing, that at that moment he had a rich valley crowded with handsome houses under his view, and yet much doubted whether any laird within ten miles spent ten pounds per annum on the literature of the day—which he, of course, distinguished from its periodical press. 'No,' said Constable, 'there is no market among them that is worth one's thinking about. They are contented with a review or a magazine, or at best with a paltry subscription to some circulating library forty miles off. But if I live for half-a-dozen years, I 'll make it as impossible that there should not be a good library in every decent house in Britain as that the shepherd's ingle-nook should want the *saut poke*. Ay, and what 's that?' he continued, warming and puffing; 'why should the ingle-nook itself want a shelf for *the novels?*'—'I see your drift, my man,' says Sir Walter; —'you 're for being like Billy Pitt in Gilray's print—you want to get into the salt-box yourself.'—'Yes,' he responded,—'I have hitherto been thinking only of the wax-lights, but before I 'm a twelvemonth older I shall have my hand upon the tallow.'—'Troth,' says Scott, 'you are indeed likely to be "The grand Napoleon of the realms of *print*."'—'If you outlive me,' says Constable, with a regal smile, 'I bespeak that line for my tomb-stone; but, in the meantime, may I presume to ask you to be my right-hand man when I open my campaign of Marengo? I have now settled my outline of operations—a three-shilling or half-crown volume every month, which must and shall sell, not by thousands or tens of thousands, but by hundreds of thousands—ay, by millions! Twelve volumes in the year, a halfpenny of profit upon every copy of which will make me richer than the possession of all the copyrights of all the quartos that ever were or will be hot-pressed!—twelve volumes, so good, that millions must wish to have them, and so cheap that every butcher's callant may have them, if he pleases to let me tax him sixpence a week!'

"Many a previous consultation, and many a solitary meditation, too, prompted Scott's answer.—'Your plan,' said he, 'cannot fail, provided the books be really good; but you must not start until you have not only leading columns, but depth upon depth of reserve in thorough

order. I am willing to do my part in this grand enterprise. Often, of late, have I felt that the vein of fiction was nearly worked out; often, as you all know, have I been thinking seriously of turning my hand to history. I am of opinion that historical writing has no more been adapted to the demands of the increased circles among which literature does already find its way, than you allege as to the shape and price of books in general. What say you to taking the field with a Life of the *other* Napoleon?'

"The reader does not need to be told that the series of cheap volumes, subsequently issued under the title of 'Constable's Miscellany,' was the scheme on which this great bookseller was brooding. Before he left Abbotsford, it was arranged that the first Number of this collection should consist of one-half of Waverley; the second, of the first section of a 'Life of Napoleon Buonaparte by the Author of Waverley;' that this life should be comprised in four of these Numbers; and that, until the whole series of his novels should have been issued,—a volume every second month, in this new and uncostly form,—he should keep the Ballantyne press going with a series of historical works, to be issued on the alternate months. Such were, as far as Scott was concerned, the first outlines of a daring plan never destined to be carried into execution on the gigantic scale or with the grand appliances which the projector contemplated, but destined, nevertheless, to lead the way in one of the greatest revolutions that literary history will ever have to record—a revolution not the less sure to be completed, though as yet, after the lapse of twelve years, we see only its beginnings."[1]

From the following extract from legal queries put to my father after the sequestration, with reference to the Life of Napoleon, it would appear that the earliest suggestion of that work had been made by him, and not by Sir Walter Scott:—

"*Q.* About what period was it agreed that Sir Walter Scott should write a Life of Buonaparte?—*A.* To the best of my recollection, some time between the 20th May and 20th June last year.

[1] Constable's Miscellany also inaugurated the cloth bindings which are now universally adopted in our own and other countries.

"*Q.* Did you apply to Sir Walter to write this work?—*A.* I did, and I will state the object in view. I had projected a periodical work entitled 'Constable's Miscellany,' the plan of which met with Sir Walter Scott's hearty approbation. In the list of works contained in the prospectus of this Miscellany, I had inserted a Life of Napoleon Buonaparte in four vols., which list was submitted to several of the literary friends of the house. In the course of showing it to Mr. Lockhart, who had undertaken to write the Life of Burns, I suggested whether it would be possible to obtain a Life of Napoleon from Sir Walter Scott, and it was through this medium that the proposal was first made to him. Sir Walter thought favourably of the project, and, within two or three days after this meeting with Mr. Lockhart, I saw Sir Walter on the subject, when it was agreed that the work should consist of four vols., and be brought out under the name of the Author of Waverley, in such form and size as might be deemed most expedient. The terms to be the same as those entered into for the Crusaders, for instance. 'I stated to Sir Walter,' that as this work would likely meet a more extensive demand than a work of fiction, it had occurred to me that arrangements could be made entitling us to give him a much larger sum of money. His reply was—'Let us bring out the first edition, and the more of it that can be sold it will be the better for all of us. You know we do not deal in hard bargain-making with each other. In the meantime let us get materials; insert the Memoirs in the list of your Miscellany, giving the name of the Author of Waverley as the author.' This, to the best of my recol-

lection, is the substance of what passed at the first meeting between Sir Walter Scott and myself on the subject of the Memoirs of Napoleon.

"*Q.* Did you communicate this arrangement to any one?—*A.* I did. Mr. Cadell was not in the shop at the time, but I thought the matter so important that I left a line for him that he might know of our good fortune without delay. Mr. Cadell and myself had afterwards a meeting with Mr. Ballantyne, who was immediately to give us an offer of the work in the usual form, and I think Mr. Ballantyne requested to be furnished with a scroll of the agreement.

"*Q.* Was that agreement extended?—*A.* A scroll or copy of it was afterwards submitted to me by Mr. Cadell; but it was not immediately extended, as I understood, owing to these existing differences of opinion as to the form in which the book should first appear. Mr. Ballantyne furnished estimates of it, both in the post size as a four-volume book, and in the demy octavo size as a three-volume book. A quarto edition was also thought of.

"*Q.* Was the extent of the book fixed at four vols., and were you to pay the author for it the same as for the Crusaders, for instance?—*A.* I understood Sir Walter as undertaking to give us a work in four vols., and that we were to have the same number of copies for the same money as of the Crusaders. I proposed, in order to prevent the extension beyond four vols., that the size of page should be somewhat increased, so as to give us three vols. in octavo of about 500 pages each, similar to the Novels and Tales of that size, and the work is now printing in post octavo on that plan.

"*Q.* When was the post octavo size determined on?—*A.* Some time in October last, when I was in London, and from communications with the trade having found that the post size should be adopted in the first instance. I communicated this to Mr. Cadell, and the work went immediately to press.

"*Q.* Was the regulation of the size entirely with you?—*A.* I considered it was so—Sir Walter Scott having left it to my decision.

"*Q.* Did Sir Walter Scott do so in conversation or by letter?—*A.* He did it by letters from Abbotsford early in the month of September, and he did it afterwards in conversation early in October at Abbotsford when on my way to London.

"*Q.* What impression is now printing?—*A.* I understand the impression to be 8000 copies; it was my wish in the first instance to have printed only 6000 in this size, and to have had 3500 in octavo; these two quantities I considered to be all that was bargained for in the first instance with the author, and I cannot say why this plan was departed from.

"*Q.* Was there any bargain for future editions; the insertion of the work in your Miscellany for instance?—*A.* None; all the transactions with Sir Walter Scott and the house were uniformly conducted by him in a manner so accommodating and liberal, that stipulations which would have been necessary in other cases were not attended to in dealings with him. I may here mention, that I was so sanguine as to the success of the Memoirs of Napoleon by the Author of Waverley, that I did not

hesitate to express it as my opinion that I had much confidence in its producing him at least £10,000; and this, I have no doubt, I observed as my expectation to Sir Walter Scott at least once.

"*Q.* Did you furnish Sir Walter Scott with any books for this undertaking?—*A.* I procured a great many; in particular, a complete set of the *Moniteur*, purchased on purpose by a friend in Paris."

From Edinburgh, on the 16th May,—more than one consultation having probably taken place in the interval,—Mr. Lockhart writes again to my father on the subject of the Miscellany:—

"My dear Sir,—I carried these papers into the country with me, and have been thinking a good deal on this subject. I have also had some further conversation with Sir Walter in regard to several points connected with it, and am happy to say that he coincides with me as to the opinion I ventured to express in relation to that *great matter*, the *Poetry*. If we be right here, it would be wrong, and indeed suicidal, in you to leave the rivals and imitators you are sure forthwith to have, to take undisturbed possession of such an instrument as this. Besides, you would, by giving a selection of real good English poetry, do a thing which never really has been done, and you have the power here as elsewhere to set the thing agoing with a charm no one else can command—I mean by printing first some of the most popular poetry of our own time. Of course, even Sir Walter's poems have scarcely as yet come into familiar contact with the lower classes of

readers. The Minstrelsy of the Border ought surely to be the most popular work in the world among such readers, if it were simply cut down so as to exclude the ballads that are not good, but only curious, and the more technically antiquarian part of the notes.

"I think, in order to keep yourself as free as possible, the title might perhaps stand 'Constable's Weekly Miscellany; or Select Works of British Authors, chiefly Modern,' stating in your advertisement or prospectus the general purposes and plan of the whole work,—this, rather than hinting anything about 'readers of every class' on the title-page itself, for people though poor need not have their poverty continually thrown in their faces.

"Another suggestion I meant to make was, that you should get a readable abridgment of M'Crie's Life of Knox, leaving out all the controversial stuff and much of the angry feeling,—the mere personal history, in short, of a great and good man, whose name never can cease to be interesting in Scotland. Perhaps it might be well to have the lives of Luther, Calvin, Knox, and some others, in one or more volumes together, as 'Lives of the Reformers.' Perhaps I am suggesting a thing which has already been done.

"I also thought of suggesting a book on Bruce and Wallace's history, but on consideration I believe that had better remain for a romance by the Author of Waverley. Certainly, however, I am of opinion that much is to be done by throwing the materials of history into the ever attractive form of biography. This I am sure is true, and I hope you will think of it. I hope when you turn over

the Poetry in your mind you will come to the conclusion above stated. The Drama, in like manner, has never been to any purpose *selected.* How few authors do to publish entire now-a-days, and how few are republished in any other way!

"This age has two propensities in literature which have not as yet been *gratified together*—the one is to get at the marrow of the matter without the bone, that is, to have the substance only of what has been written; the other is to have as much as possible of the original *manner* of the old writers. Now, abridgments hitherto leave the latter of these wishes utterly unsatisfied.

"I am of opinion that a most curious and lastingly popular book of extracts from the writers of British history might be made, and I think nothing could better fall in with your great scheme.

"Another poor man's book that ought to be done is a *law-book.* You will perhaps laugh at this; but I think, after some reflection, you will agree with me that they are at present curious in regard to such subjects, that they ought to be so, and that it is a shame they have not the means of reading what concerns them all, in an intelligible form. I have put these few hints on paper, but should be happy to have another conversation with yourself any time you are so disposed.—Yours, etc.

"J. G. LOCKHART."

The Tales of the Crusaders appeared early in June, and on the 25th of that month my father writes reassuringly to Sir Walter of the favourable reception of both tales by

the public, and suggests a visit to Paris in the interest of the Life of Napoleon, now definitely arranged for:—

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—You will, I am sure, excuse my troubling you with two lines to tell you something of the success of the Crusaders—in a word, it is very great. All the copies we reserved for sale here are gone, and we have been obliged to order back some of those sent to London, and, what is not less gratifying, the general opinion, so far as it has reached me, is 'that both Tales are of equal excellence.'

"I have been thinking of Nap., and I know you will not be offended at any suggestion I may venture respecting it. Nothing, as I have formerly ventured to say, has ever appeared in the literary world to excite half the interest of this work, and I am tempted to suggest your taking a quiet trip to Paris to refresh your recollections. You could move over after your visit to Ireland without much waste of time. Mr. Lockhart could, I have no doubt, collect many useful materials, etc., for which I would request permission to provide the means.

"This matter has been on my mind for a good many days, and I cannot longer delay putting you in possession of it in case you should entertain the project.—I am, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

While visiting Miss Edgeworth in July of this year, Mr. Lockhart intimates as follows that lady's high approval of the plan of the Miscellany, and her willingness to aid it:—

"EDGEWORTHSTOWN, *July* 31, 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have communicated the message

with which you intrusted me to Miss Edgeworth, and I am happy to say that she is, as I prophesied she would not fail to be, delighted with your great scheme, which she says is equally ingenious, wise, patriotic, and good. She seems anxious to contribute to the work anything which you should point out, and to which she might feel herself able—which last proviso is well understood by everybody but herself. I have no doubt you may easily prevail on her to give you her name for the Prospectus in some biographical works, or series of tales. But besides, she seems extremely desirous to see whether some of her 'popular tales' could not be got into the work, and I am sure would write to Hunter on that subject if you should ask her. I beg you will at all events forward to her a proof of your Prospectus.

"Miss Edgeworth is going to Killarney with our party to-morrow, but will, I suppose, return hither in a few days. Sir Walter Scott is as well as I ever saw him in health, and I think has enjoyed this tour as one of the happiest and proudest times of his life. Indeed, to see the way in which he is received by *all* classes has elevated the Irish people in my estimation to no trivial amount.—Believe me, etc., J. G. LOCKHART."

From Windermere, on Sunday 22d August, SirWalter writes :—

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—I am thus far on my way homeward, and shall be at Abbotsford on Saturday, or at furthest Sunday next. We have had delightful weather, and, upon the whole, a most interesting expedition.

"When I get home I shall be anxious to get to work instantly, for to say truth I am tired of being idle, and therefore I wrote to you to forward such books as you think will help me in my new task. It will be also necessary to settle the form of the work, of which you can judge better than I. I can only say I would sacrifice much profit to the certainty of getting at once into the hands of the public, who in this case will judge for themselves, not from the representations or misrepresentations of critics—for I am pretty sure I shall offend the highfliers both of Whigs and Tories, and must expect treatment accordingly, for which I do not care, so they let me have fair play with the public.

"You talked of my revising the works you are to republish, which I will do with care. I stay here to spend a couple of days with Mr. Canning, whom I find in high spirits, and who looks much better than I expected. I shall then go to Mervells for a day, and thereafter return to Abbotsford, so as to be home on Friday or Saturday, as I said before.—Yours truly, WALTER SCOTT."

CHAPTER XVI.

Letter from Chiefswood, with reply—Letter to Sir Walter Scott anent Life of Napoleon and other matters—Letter from Abbotsford—Announcement of arrival of seventy-seven volumes of the *Moniteur*—The "Miscellany"—Proposed dedication to the King—Library of the late George Chalmers.

ON the 25th of August Sir Walter reached Abbotsford, and on the following day Mr. Lockhart addressed my father from Chiefswood:—

"MY DEAR SIR,—We reached Tweedside yesterday evening in safety, after our long and pleasant expedition, during the last week of which I had the satisfaction of seeing Sir Walter along with Wordsworth, Southey, and the other lights of the Lakes.

"I hope you are ere long to be at Abbotsford, and perhaps here, if you will so far favour us; but in the meantime I wished to tell you that I have found on my table a letter from Mr. Gleig, in which he intimates his general willingness to undertake the Life of Wellington, about which I had written to him at your desire, but of course he is as yet in the dark as to materials, extent, etc.,—in short, as to all matters as to which it may be as well for you and him to communicate directly together. His address is, 'Rev. G. R. Gleig, Ashe, near Wingham, Kent,' and you can write him when and how you please.

"I hope you and Miss Edgeworth have been ere now in correspondence.

"If this reaches you in Edinburgh, perhaps you would take the trouble and desire Ballantyne to send me the sheets of the second volume of Shakespeare, in so far as it is printed off, and to recommence his operations as soon as possible.

"Hoping then to see you very soon, I remain, etc.,

"J. G. LOCKHART."

To this letter my father sent the following reply:—

"POLTON, *3d September* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I was particularly obliged by your kind letter from Edgeworthstown, as well as that which I received since your return to Chiefswood. You have indeed had a most interesting excursion. I rejoice that Sir Walter Scott enjoyed it so much. The people of Ireland, as was to be expected, appear to have been much gratified; indeed, the numerous paragraphs in newspapers will afford some future antiquary, like John Nicholls, materials for what may be entitled *Progresses, etc.*

"I have been labouring to make the prospectus and contents of my Miscellany as interesting as possible before publishing it. There are still one or two things to arrange before finally submitting it to you, which I expect to do in a few days. This has also prevented me from writing to Miss Edgeworth. All her works being the property of London booksellers, there is no chance of my being able to obtain the privilege of using any of them; and I have not been able to fix on any new topic,

in which she would likely engage, but as to this I must have the favour of your advice; I also delay writing to Mr. Gleig till I have the pleasure of seeing you.

"I wrote to Sir Walter Scott a long letter on Tuesday last, on a variety of subjects, which I am surprised had not reached Abbotsford when Mr. Ballantyne, whom I saw yesterday, left it, and I am awaiting a call to come to visit you. In the meantime I shall transmit a parcel for Sir Walter by Mr. Huntly Gordon on Monday.

"If you will be so good as make a memorandum of any books you want for the Life of Burns, they shall be immediately procured.[1] I have been greatly disappointed in not being able to convince certain London booksellers who hold large stocks of the works of the Author of Waverley, that my plan of a cheap edition would not injure the sale of those already existing,[2] and have, in consequence, been obliged to abandon that point for the present. I am in hopes, however, of being able to bring it to bear ere long, for which the proofs of the other part of the project will in the meantime pave the way. I cannot tell you how much mortified I feel at this cross circumstance, which I could only have avoided by taking upon myself a responsibility which it may be prudent to avoid. All these works are consequently withdrawn from the list, but I do not intend telling anybody why they are so. I have had, I daresay, twenty editions of my prospectus since I saw you, and I hope you will allow to some advantage when you see it. If you are to be in town before we have a

[1] Mr. Lockhart had agreed to write a Life of Robert Burns for Constable's Miscellany.

[2] See *infra*, p. 353 *seq.*

chance of meeting in the country, I hope you will let me know, that I may be in the way.—I am, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

The letter above referred to, addressed to Sir Walter, is as follows, and offers a visit at Abbotsford :—

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"POLTON, 30*th August* 1825.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I was much gratified by your letter of the 20th from the Lakes. I would have written to you in Ireland had anything occurred in your absence worth the trouble of your receiving a letter from me.

"The commission which I sent to Paris has been executed, and I looked daily for a large case of books containing a complete set of the *Moniteur*, and every other production which was thought likely to be acceptable for your purpose. I have not, however, received any memorandum of the particulars. The announcement of the Memoirs of Napoleon has excited the interest we anticipated, and I have already had various applications on the subject of French and German editions, about which there will be no need for any immediate decision. I am resolved, as far as in my power, to follow out every measure calculated to insure the unrivalled circulation to which all concur these Memoirs will unquestionably be entitled, and on this subject I shall not easily be diverted from what I consider the best commercial views—the work is unlike any other, and will therefore admit of arrangements out of the ordinary routine.

"With regard to the size and form of printing, I would

now respectfully submit my views: I would commence with an edition in post octavo, the ordinary size, but with a page a degree fuller than the Tales of the Crusaders. You will, perhaps, have occasional notes at the bottom, and the four volumes should be of a size to enable us to make three handsome octavos, which hereafter will be the standard form of the work. I am still of the opinion which I formerly expressed, that we should have three editions in different sizes at once, if not on the same day, at least close on each other, and this, I think, can be managed to be safe and profitable, but with the details I need not at present trouble you.

"I had various conversations with Mr. Thomson on the subject of Napoleon's correspondence with Josephine. Mr. Thomson communicated with Count Flahault for me in the view of its being published, and whether the letters could not, in the meantime, be rendered accessible. The publication, it seems, under any circumstance, is by no means determined on, but should they be given, the price expected is five thousand guineas, which I should imagine greatly too much. I have an enumeration of the letters, from whence written, etc. I shall subjoin a copy of it.

"As you desired, I have got the Prefatory Memoirs and other materials composing the volumes of Miscellaneous Works in a state for being prepared for press, which I shall forward by the coach in the course of a few days. I shall then write to you any particulars that may occur to me regarding them. Perhaps you might find it agreeable to have the whole sent to the printer very soon. They could be brought out speedily, as little or no delay may be neces-

sary in regard to proof-sheets. I regret to say that some delay must take place in my plan of reprinting in a cheap form the Novels, etc., of the Author of Waverley. The value of the stock on hand of the different sizes already published, particularly that remaining with Hurst, Robinson, and Co., is far greater than I had anticipated; and as I have not been able to satisfy that firm that the new project, while it would be attended with immense and new advantages, could only in a trifling degree interfere with the demand for the existing copies, I have been obliged to abandon the project for the present, but I expect ere long the preponderance of advantage will be seen, and the plan followed up, which I am quite confident would have been successful. I am not, however, to be discouraged from proceeding in the publication of *a Weekly Miscellany*, as to the contents of which I am willing to think I have been very successful in making arrangements, and I hope to commence by putting materials into Mr. Ballantyne's hands before I go to London, which, I expect, will be in the course of next month. In the meantime, you would do me a great favour if I could be permitted an opportunity of explaining personally to you all my views on this matter, the details of which would be too long for any letter.

"Mr. Lockhart takes a deep interest in the Miscellany. His advice has already been of the greatest use to me, and I am anxious also to confer further with him about it. With these views I would be happy to wait upon you any day after Saturday first.

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"ABBOTSFORD, *Friday, 7th September.*

"DEAR CONSTABLE,—I am here once more stationary, and received your letter yesterday. I want to get to work again as soon as possible, for idleness does not suit me. I cannot however call myself idle, since I am reading and writing Notes. I shall be very desirous to have the books as soon as possible.

"James Ballantyne is also very hungry for business, and I beg of you to lend him a share just now, which we may pay back another day in some equivalent piece of kindness. I will be glad to have the Prefatory Memoirs, and with a note of the order in which they are to be published. They will occupy my leisure very well just now before I set seriously to the Memoirs.[1] I should therefore wish to have them without delay published.

"I have no doubt that your talent and experience will hit on the best possible mode of publishing the Memoirs. I am in my own secret soul a little afraid of quartos, but you know the matter best, and so far as I am concerned I resign myself to your better judgment, well aware that you will consider the credit of the work and author as more important than any immediate pecuniary advantage.

"I am sorry you find obstacles to executing your admirable plan of the Miscellany. I shall be happy to talk the matter over with you, and for that and many other reasons of good-fellowship I embrace your kind offer of coming here, and will be most happy to receive

[1] Sir Walter here refers to the Prefatory Memoirs reprinted in his Miscellaneous Works, and to Memoirs of Napoleon Buonaparte.

you on Wednesday, which day I only name because Monday might be too early for you. Tuesday is the Forest Club. If Mrs. Constable can accompany you, Lady Scott will be delighted to see her, and claims, I think, a promise of the kind.

"Milliken of Dublin was to send a considerable package of books for me under the charge of your house. Are there any tidings of it yet? I want much the memoirs of Ségur, not those respecting the Russian campaign, which I have, but the memoirs of Ségur the father, who was Master of the Ceremonies to Buonaparte. His personal access to the Emperor must have given him many opportunities to see and record.

"I want also to see a book called 'To-day in Ireland,' much spoken of in that country. There is also an old picture, an original, I think, of Jamie VI., coming to your charge in a box. I wish you would open it, and see whether it would be worth while to have it a little repaired and framed.

"Our post-hours here are altered, and the day's post reaches me betwixt four and five P.M.; this for information.

"I will ask Lockhart to meet you on Friday.—Yours truly, WALTER SCOTT."

The two following letters announce, *inter alia*, the arrival of seventy-seven volumes of the *Moniteur!* and give a cheerful view of the prospects of the Miscellany:—

"POLTON, *20th September* 1825.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—You will, I hope, have received

a parcel containing the books from Paris. There are others expected daily. The set of the *Moniteur* has at last arrived, commencing in June 1789, and continued to December 1823, in 70 volumes, with 7 volumes of analysis, tables, etc., in all 77 volumes. The first volume has been sent out by the coach, the others go by the carrier to-morrow. Perhaps you might not ultimately desire to retain this bulky article, which would be, I should think, acceptable to the Advocates' Library. There was a similar paper published in Germany, the title of which I forget, that contains many documents which did not find their way into the *Moniteur*, and of which also I expect to procure you a copy.

"I have not yet been able to obtain some of the articles for the Miscellaneous Works, but I expect to get most of them before I go to London, which I trust may be about the end of next week. The printing of Paul's Letters is well advanced, and the additional appendix will be required as soon as possible. Perhaps you will be good enough to send me a few lines, to be forwarded to Captain Hall, on the subject of Lady Delancey's Narrative, which would form a most valuable addition to the volume.[1]

"You would be surprised at my making no allusion to your letter of 7th September, when I was at Abbotsford. The fact is you had addressed it London instead of Edinburgh, and I did not receive it till the day after my return here. I am glad to say I have had it in my power to send Ballantyne two or three jobs within the last

[1] See vol. ii. p. 473 *seq.*

week—one of them the History of the Picts, by our old friend Ritson. Shakespeare is getting on, and Captain Hall's Voyages for my Miscellany will be in hand early next month. I shall be very happy to receive your commissions for London. I shall have my eye on materials for the new work. There are, I should think, pretty full lists of publications in Watt's Bibliotheca, which might assist me, if I knew what you already possess.—I am, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"LONDON, 11*th October* 1825.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I have the pleasure of sending you along with this the books as per list enclosed; there are some others on the same subject which I expect to procure immediately.

"I arrived here last week, and I am truly glad to inform you that my plan of a Weekly Miscellany meets with great approbation, and I can now proceed in the project with considerable confidence as to its success and general utility. There will doubtless be many imitators of my scheme, but I must endeavour to meet rivalship by the most active exertions. My list of publications in the meantime gives general satisfaction; indeed, I am most sanguine that the publication will extend itself throughout the country, because I shall take care that no work shall appear in it that is not of first-rate excellence, or that can at any time give offence to the friends of good order and good conduct, and with this view I shall exclude altogether all books of controversy in religion and politics. The suc-

cess of my Miscellany will, I trust, have a beneficial effect in cutting off the trash which, in the shape of books, is now circulated by persons without either character or good principles all over the country, and who not unfrequently lend their influence in promoting the sale of cheap books to corrupt men's minds and create mischief. I need not, I am sure, repeat to you how much I feel interested in the success of this my favourite scheme, viewing it not only as a commercial undertaking, but as one which, I hope, will tend to promote the moral and intellectual improvement of the people. The sale of cheap books in this country is at present carried on to an extent altogether astonishing, but almost entirely in the hands of the most inferior class of traders.

"An idea has been strongly working in my mind for some months, but I can hardly now muster courage to mention it. It is a dedication to the King. I do not mean a mere inscription; but such an address as should explain the nature and object of the undertaking in suitable language, addressing the King as the real friend of knowledge, the enlightened promoter of the progress of intelligence among all classes, as the head of the world of letters, and this at a moment when all parties are agreed as to the propriety of diffusing useful knowledge. Thus I could wish to approach the throne. By a patronage so illustrious and condescending, I conceive the most decided and extensive popularity would at once be secured for my work; but I have no channel to ascertain whether an application on the subject would be likely to meet with the royal favour, and I know not how I am to set about

it. I am already in every way so greatly indebted to you, that I am unwilling, even important as the present matter may be, to increase your trouble; yet it would be conferring the highest obligation on me if you would have the goodness to advise or guide me in this interesting and most important affair. I intend the publication to commence on the 1st of January, and to begin with Captain Basil Hall's account of Loo-Choo. I transmit herewith a specimen of the manner of printing, etc., which I believe you have not yet seen.

"I trust to your usual kindness in forgiving the freedom which I now use, and I am, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"POLTON, *November 11th*, 1825.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—You have, I trust, received sundry parcels of French books which I forwarded from London. I returned on Monday evening well pleased with the success of my journey. I was beset with inquiries of every sort and degree respecting a certain nameless forthcoming work.[1] The demand will quite justify my sanguine expectations.

"I have secured large orders for the Miscellany, the plan of which continues to meet with almost universal approbation. My anxiety increases as to the Dedication,[2] which would be a powerful aid.

[1] Woodstock.

[2] The proposed dedication of the Miscellany to his Majesty George IV. was accepted, and on the 20th December Sir Walter, who had negotiated the matter, wrote to my father to announce the fact.

"I am confining myself here for a day or two till I overcome a slight attack of gout in one of my feet, but expect to be in Princes Street in the beginning of next week, and trouble you at present with these few lines to account for your not seeing me in town.

"It will, I am sure, give you infinite pleasure to know that I have secured for Scotland the entire library and manuscript collections of the late Mr. Chalmers,[1] the details respecting which would be too tedious for a letter, but I will communicate the whole to you at meeting. In the meantime the matter will remain between ourselves, there being some circumstances connected with the property which render it advisable that it should be so just for the present.

"When I left London there was a considerable gloom in the commercial world owing to some extensive failures; more were expected, and there appeared a sort of distrust and more general want of confidence than I have had occasion to hear of at any former time. Literature, however, thrives in the midst of all this.—I am, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

[1] With regard to this my father was disappointed.—See *ante*, vol. i. p. 465.

CHAPTER XVII.

Shadows begin to fall—Extract letter from Joseph Ogle Robinson, with my father's reply—Mr. Robinson's speculations in the stock-markets—He acknowledges the announcement of a Life of Napoleon—Plan of Constable's Miscellany expounded to Mr. Robinson—He objects to the introduction of the Waverley Novels, which are accordingly withdrawn.

THE day was now near at hand when by the reckless speculation of parties in close commercial connexion with Archibald Constable and Company, not only was the ruin to be consummated of that firm, and of James Ballantyne and Co., but,—in consequence of his unfortunate pecuniary relation to both,—Sir Walter Scott, the darling of the public, was to be stripped of the splendid fortune which his genius had acquired for him, and to be made liable for debts with which he ought to have had no concern.

For several years money had been unusually plentiful, and under the name and form of Joint-Stock Companies innumerable schemes and projects had been devised for its profitable employment. The result was in the end disastrous, and, as Mr. Lockhart says,[1] "when it was rumoured that this great bookseller, or printer, had become a principal holder of South American mining shares —that another was the leading director of a railway company—a third of a gas company—while a fourth house had risked about £100,000 in a cast upon the most

[1] See Life, vol. vi. p. 103.

capricious of all agricultural products—*hops*, it was no wonder that bankers should begin to calculate balances and pause upon discounts."

We cannot more appropriately lead up to our sad catastrophe than by quotations from the correspondence of my father's house with that of their London agents, Messrs. Hurst, Robinson, and Co., and more especially from the letters that passed between himself and Mr. Robinson, the most active member of the London firm. In the course of 1825 Messrs. Hurst, Robinson, and Co. effected a removal from No. 90 Cheapside to very extensive premises at the corner of Waterloo Place and Pall Mall, where they contemplated engaging largely in the sale of engravings as well as of books, a project with which my father did not sympathize. On the 25th December 1824 Mr. Robinson wrote a letter of eighteen pages, from which I shall here give an extract:—

". . . You never object to a little trade news, therefore I may venture to amuse myself by relating what is now most engaging the attention of the London trade. On the 16th Mr. Murray had his *annual* sale, which always excites considerable interest, being *only* annual, and containing so many new books, as well as a great many remainders. Lord Byron's works sold very well; much better than they have done for the last two years. The Sketch-Book sold most wonderfully, as well as the Domestic Cookery. The remainders sold for very little above waste, though most of these books were published within the last eighteen months; and in my opinion, if Mr. Murray had sold 50 out of 500, and wasted 450, he would have

put more money in his pocket. The new books were sold 7½ to 15 per cent. and 20 per cent. under sale; but I think generally he did not sell half the number I have usually taken of your books. We had a very numerous company indeed, and according to my view of the business of the day property was sold to the amount of £20,000. . . . Had the writer of this been in the humour for remainders, he would have bought every lot, they sold so very low; but I have now closed my buying-book until I am settled at the West End, unless it may be a few lots from A. C. and Co.

". . . You will herewith receive a particular statement of our entire stock of all your publications except the most important ones, the Encyclopædia and the Supplement, and the delivery of both these is *yet* so very imperfect that I have no particular state of the stock to offer; but this would not have been the case had we not granted bills before the completion of the deliveries; and I am sure these books ought to have been entirely delivered long long ago.

"This hint, I trust, will be sufficient, and I may now observe to you that I have lately been doing very great things indeed with the Encyclopædia Britannica, 20 vols. It has been well advertised in all the provincial papers in all the large towns in the kingdom, and I have done more with it the last six months than I ever did before, and in London it is advertised by one or other, at one price or other, every day; and what I might spend on the *Times* newspaper I am giving in credit and odd books to the London trade, who are driving it about daily, and I shall ere

long have a very favourable report to give you of this work; but the Supplement I can't say so much for, and the truth is, this work has never yet been advertised as a complete work in 6 vols., and the fragment that is yet wanted tends greatly to injure the sale. Pray do give us instructions *to advertise the Supplement*, and that will do us all great good.

"The Novels and Tales, etc., by the Author of Waverley:—you will find our stock *immense*, of the detached books most particularly, as we are not now selling as many of them annually as will pay the *interest* of the stock at the very *reduced* rates at which I valued them in our last balance; and I need hardly tell you they are valued much, very much, under cost, and I am very anxious to reduce this part of our stock, but it will be difficult to be done without injury to some of us. However, something must be done in the course of the coming year. Some of these works, of which we have only about 300, and you not above 50, will go at regular sale price, but in those instances where our stock of a work exceeds 1000 copies, I fancy we shall need to make a greater sacrifice than we have yet done in order to reduce the stock: therefore the one must pay for the other, and as your stock is so very small, the best thing you can do to aid us is to keep to sale price, as your sale for them is certain, and if the price is kept up in small quantities it is much easier for us to effect sales for quantities of say 25 or 50 at a time, by giving a larger allowance.

"With this stock before you of this author's works—above £40,000,—I think you will not consider it unreason-

able our expecting the Crusaders on terms similar to what we had them in former days. You must also bear in mind that you have all the Irish trade, greater part of which we formerly had. If you think proper we will take 1080 Novels and Tales, 16 vols. 12mo, and the Crusaders, as offered by us lately, without any other books; but on any less advantageous terms I think you must admit with our present stock it would be imprudent in us to purchase. I think you will also admit that no other house in London would have speculated to the extent we have done in one author's works, and we are surely entitled to some little indulgence and liberal terms on this ground; and further, I might remark that our now taking 1080 Novels and Tales, 16 vols. 12mo, is very different to taking the first 1000; the trade and the public are both supplied, and the demand naturally reduced very much. I don't think the author is less popular than ever, but it is certain that the set-books begin now to affect the sale of every new work in its detached form,—I would venture to say at least to the extent of 1000 copies, however good the book may be; and this is not a speculative opinion, but one formed on actual experience of facts.

"Scott's Poetry, 8vo: I have lately had 25 in exchange from Longman to reduce their stock, and I should like to treat with you for a new edition on terms similar to the Miniature Poetry. I would always rather purchase an entire edition than a portion of it, and this plan I should like to adopt with your new Pocket Lyre, etc.—Scott's Shakespeare: pray how do you stand about this latter book, and when is it likely to appear? I have some

Shakespeare speculations on the carpet, and would make them in some measure subservient to your greater works. I ought to remark that the *miniature* books have not gone as well as you and I contemplated; but if we could but first give the detached Novels a drive, then I think we could drive the miniature books by bringing them forward in parts. We have sold nearly 5000 of The Literary Souvenir, and it is selling daily. Next year we shall make it a gem indeed, with the aid of Lawrence, Wilkie, Leslie, etc. etc.

"This you will consider a tedious epistle, but I must give you another letter shortly, with my remarks on the other parts of our stock of your publications; perhaps it may accompany this parcel.

"With the compliments of the season, believe me, my dear Sir, yours most faithfully, J. O. ROBINSON.

"To A. Constable, Esq."

The following reply from my father, written a month later, will, I believe, be read with interest. Rumours of Mr. Robinson's discursive "speculations" had evidently reached Edinburgh, and enterprising as he himself was in literary undertakings, my father's pecuniary speculations were rigidly confined to these, and he desired to discourage in his correspondent all interference with risks outside their sphere:—

"POLTON HOUSE, *25th January* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Your long and important letter of Christmas-day has met due consideration, though it has not been sooner entirely in my power to reply to it.

"The account of Mr. Murray's sale interested me much.

He must have made many sacrifices, I presume, and will have shown the fallibility of the greatest publishers. I am not altogether of your opinion that it is better to waste largely than sell cheap and largely. I don't think either plan so good as laying books up snugly in a warehouse and clearing it out occasionally—at the distance of years perhaps. This would at least be my plan, if I could afford it. The choice of books is no doubt very difficult. I have never *yet* had occasion to sell so cheap as *waste* any great proportion of what I could call my own books. A cheap list, as I think I once said before, is, in my estimation, a perfect hydra to literary enterprise. There is no small skill necessary in the selection of subjects for publication, and there is not less discrimination necessary in the disposal of the books. My advice would be to have no cheap list, and to render books waste paper as seldom as possible. Experience is necessary in most branches of business; it is unquestionably so in regulating the sale of books; as to this I have yet much to learn. I should like to see Murray's Catalogue, *marked*. When an opportunity occurs you will perhaps send it down to me.

"The affair of Langhorne's Plutarch does not surprise me; but many thanks for the history of our young friend —he can make money, but often in a short-sighted way, I fear. To be sure, life is short, he will say, and it is wise to make the money while he finds gulls to furnish means of doing so. Much Stock Exchange jobbing is nearly as bad. I hear *a friend of mine* tries his hand occasionally in this way. I should like the profits, but I neither desire the risk of loss nor the demoralization of mind from

one's own more proper pursuits, which in my opinion such gambling ever leads to—and we have all heard of the fate of the Goldsmids and others, even of the most fortunate.

"The arrangements you mention of your house of business in Pall Mall I have no doubt will tend much to your comfort, and enable you completely to separate the print and book concerns. I presume the terms you get for Cheapside very fair, and your plan of selling off £10,000 on the premises after you quit them is excellent. You have not said anything of the amount of outlay for the new concern.

"The print of Little Red Riding-Hood is very beautiful. I like the engraving better than the figure—the head and face represent a young woman, the under part that of a child. The head of the Duke of York is excellent; but who buys such?—this to me, like many other things in the present day, is altogether incomprehensible. I can admire them, however, and feel much indebted to you for thinking of me in this way occasionally. While on this subject I may mention that I have arranged that no print shall be made from Leslie's fine picture of Sir Walter Scott for seven years. I hope you had a glimpse of it. There is a head of Sir Walter doing here by Walker, from Sir H. Raeburn's last picture. It is merely of the head size, I believe.

"With regard to the Encyclopædia, I am most happy the sale continues to be so good; indeed, I have no fear as to the ultimate result of that purchase. The copies still to send—your odd volumes, etc.—are making up.

There has been a person engaged on this matter for many months, and it would not be advisable to disturb the books till he has advanced a little farther. He shall do nothing else till the whole is completed, and this, I hope, may be in the course of the summer. I expect a good many sets may be made up when the odd parts here are added to those in your hands. On the subject of advertising, I would merely add that your mode is no doubt a substantial one; but advertisements in the ordinary way, in newspapers, you may depend on it, *always pay.* You may think otherwise, and be told otherwise; but I say—advertise judiciously and you will never fail to reap the benefit.

"The want of these few pages of the Supplement so long is a sad botheration; they are now, I hope, forthcoming. The instant they are so, this book must have the most vigorous advertising. It is worthy of the best consideration all of us can give to the subject, and *must* have it. The sale will then, I hope, be what the most sanguine of us could wish it. In the meantime the book has, I trust, been doing well. It is the most valuable collection of treatises ever combined in one work. The moment the additional pages are ready you shall hear from us as to advertising.

"Your stock of the Novels, etc., of the Author of Waverley is very great, but your sales have been immense. Of the books published since you went to Cheapside, I fancy the amount must be nearly £100,000, independent of the sets. I have thought long and seriously of some plan for getting rid of the greater part of the remainders

of these books. If I had you a week here quietly beside me, I think I might devise something of the kind. I have sundry plans in cogitation, which I cannot just yet commit to writing. The sets of different sizes are all excellent property, and in estimating your stock, each size ought to be considered as a separate book, and not as the writings of one author. Thus the octavo edition, Lord Byron's Works; the foolscap size, Geoffrey Crayon; the *miniature* (as your Worship calls them), Lindley Murray, Mangnall's Questions, and Domestic Cookery.

"I am much disappointed that the small size has not gone off so well as we calculated; but remember, my good sir, you printed the books according to my plan, and you adopted your own plan in selling them. Something must yet be done in the way originally devised; but it will require no small consideration how to set about it. I may enlighten you, perhaps, a little as to this next time we meet. The prices of all these books must be kept up, or much *much* damage will follow.

"With regard to the terms for The Crusaders—number to be taken by you, etc., I really find I have nothing new to remark. We cannot give 15 per cent. discount on any account whatever. It is altogether unreasonable your desiring such on an article actually sold before it reaches you. As to the old affair of exchange for Peveril, you are still farther wrong. We were to give you books *then existing*, not *to exist*. If your rule were to be followed, you might with equal propriety have insisted on taking payment in the first copies of The Crusaders, or any of the others already gone by. I never wish to act unrea-

sonably, and cannot consent to countenance it in you. It is not the amount of the matter taken by itself, but the principle of it, that I am looking at; and allow me to add, also, my dear sir, that you have repeatedly assumed a tone in regard to this altogether unworthy of parties so deeply and firmly interested in each other as we are. I hope this will be finally closed without farther ado, and the bargain for 1000 of the foolscap edition of Novels and Tales along with it. It is, in my opinion, altogether consistent with the purest mercantile integrity that it should be thus finished. Your ideas as to the popularity of these most productive works very much coincide with my own, and the first impressions of future works may be regulated accordingly. The Crusaders will not be out so soon as we expected; for some months perhaps—this for your own information only.

"The octavo edition of Sir Walter Scott's Poetical Works proceeds, and will be ready in a few months. If you don't ask too great a pennyworth, you may likely have the greater part of our share.

"I was glad to learn lately that you are not to proceed farther with Ballantyne's Novelist's Library. The book was on a bad plan, as I believe I have often told you. I hope, however, that the speculation has paid, as your advance in the way of copy-money was unusually small. We have just purchased the final property of the Biographical Sketches attached to this work, which we shall add by and bye to the Miscellaneous Works in Prose of Sir Walter Scott, Bart, in six volumes octavo. I daresay you would consider 1000 copies of such a safe undertaking;

we shall make it a handsome book. This, you are aware, has been a favourite project with me for some time.

"It gives me great pleasure to tell you that the first sheet of Sir Walter Scott's Shakespeare is now in type. I enclose you a specimen of the manner and appearance, in regard to notes, etc.; it will make ten volumes. The first volume contains the Life of Shakespeare, by Sir Walter. He is to be assisted in the notes by Mr. Lockhart, who is perhaps the best philologist of the present day. We shall also print an edition in foolscap octavo, and perhaps afterwards one in a smaller size of the octavo. In the meantime we intend only 1000 copies—the greater portion of which I have no doubt will go your way. This I expect will be a first-rate property. We have no intention of giving plates, except a head of Shakespeare, and probably vignettes in the title-page.

"Materials for the Encyclopædia for Youth are getting forward, and the Encyclopædia for Mechanics is likewise in some progress. I must, if possible, be in London before either of these important undertakings is more fully announced. The size and style of the elementary work I consider as in a great degree fixed; but the other, as to size, extent, etc., must be regulated by prospects of sale, mode of publication, etc. I hope to be able to start with considerable impressions of both.

"I observe your remark as to purchasing entire editions of books rather than portions of them; that I confess falls in a good deal with my own wishes, and in many instances might be advantageous to both parties; but then your long credits and discounts are serious. We can consider of this, and talk about it when we meet.

"Now, my good friend, on looking at your stock of our books generally, I think, considering the extent of our dealings, it is wonderfully small, though much more heavy in some things than I could have wished, or indeed supposed. Dryden must be advertised again, and you have not done nearly enough in this way with the small edition of Novels, Poetry, etc. If it please God that we all live to midsummer, I hope we shall see the list greatly reduced. Don't be hasty in making waste-paper; but I fancy you have nothing now admitting of such treatment—it is what I have never yet done *in any one instance.* But you will say, perhaps, others have done it for me.

"What is the present duty on books imported into America? How would it do to make up 50 or 100 libraries of books for that country? I should think such a scheme well worthy of consideration; but I am ignorant as to the expenses of exportation. By libraries I mean collections of popular books. There is a great deal to be done in this way, I should think. The Americans would certainly prefer our editions to their own if they could get them; but you may have had all this in view already, and may have ascertained its practicability. I am in ignorance of the trade to be done with that country, and merely drop this hint.

"I have many other matters on which I shall write to you as occasion requires. I hope Mrs. Robinson and your family are again quite well. I was much grieved to hear that your sister, Miss Robinson, has not yet entirely recovered. I beg my kindest compliments to all at your fireside at Clapham, in which Mrs. Constable and those

about me unite, and I am, my dear Sir, ever faithfully yours, ARCHD. CONSTABLE."

In a letter of Robinson's of April 18, 1825, I find the following passage:—"I may mention here, that though the dividends were paid last Friday, yet money is by no means plentiful, and the reason assigned is that the Stock-jobbing Companies have swallowed much good money." In a letter of 14th May he writes, with reference to a private debt of my father's, "I assure you I feel much interest about all your private matters, and if I could personally aid you to obliterate the annexed account it would give me great pleasure. I can only say I am most decidedly at your command, and while I have no more love for Joint-Stock Companies than yourself, yet I have no objection to a few hundreds or thousands made honourably without risk of loss in any private matters, and not calculated in any degree to injure the firm with which I stand connected. I have done very little in this way, but since I saw you I have made a few hundreds, which I find very useful in my large family; and I now only name these matters in order to say how active and diligent and happy I shall always be to forward your views. Now I have said all I can, and await your commands."

Of my father's reply to this suggestion I possess no copy, but its tenor may be divined from the following concluding sentence in the next letter of Mr. Robinson: "I am much amused with your remarks about *Stock markets*. Don't be alarmed; you will never hear of me venturing many hundreds." It had been well for himself and others had this assertion proved true!

Before the 1st of June my father must have made known to Robinson that Sir Walter Scott had undertaken to write the Life of Napoleon, though apparently as yet withholding all intimation of the "Miscellany." Mr. Robinson thus acknowledges the intelligence :—

"LONDON, *June* 1, 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am highly pleased with the communication respecting the Author of Waverley, and no doubt the work must be highly interesting to every individual in every corner of the globe. England, however, is the great place for the sale of the work, to produce profit to the proprietors, and therefore the mode of publication requires great consideration. Since you have honoured me by asking my opinion as to this point, and having thought it over in every point of view in which I can look at it, I now venture to say that I should, in the first instance, publish in 2 vols. quarto, very handsome, if possible, with a good portrait, and I would venture upon 2000 copies as a *bona fide* transaction, but then I would sell within 250 before I even *named an octavo* or any other edition; and if I am right, the quarto would all sell in one month or less, and the octavo might be ready to be introduced at a moment's notice,—say 3 vols. *demy octavo*, which, after all, is the best-sized library book, in my humble opinion, and of this I would at once say 5000 copies. Indeed, I am not sure if I would not even say 8000 copies, and recommend you to print 10,000— all *this good Library size;* and by printing this large number the paper and print would come *very low*, and produce you much more profit than by introducing all the sizes at once; and if the

octavo sold, as I expect it would, then a post octavo could be introduced, and even in due time a miniature edition; but it does appear to me that you would injure the sale, if not entirely destroy the quarto, by announcing all the sizes at once; however, this I submit to your better judgment and consideration.

"I am happy to say that *British copyright* may be *secured* in Paris by publishing in Paris the same day, or the day before you do in England, and depositing two copies of the work in the National Library. I have a legal opinion taken in Paris now before me, which shall be sent to you in the first parcel. I have only this instant received it, or you should have had it with the Magazines, but no delay shall be suffered. Mr. Mann is yet in Paris, and it is not improbable that we may establish him in that city, or otherwise make such arrangements as shall secure your interests as well as our own.—I am, my dear Sir, yours very truly, J. O. ROBINSON."

The plan of the Miscellany is clearly and simply stated in the following letter to Mr. Robinson:—

"POLTON HOUSE, *June* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—The great change in the sale of books in regard to size and mode of publication has, as you know, engaged much of my attention for the last three years. The demand in the higher and literary classes, or those who, not many years ago, were the only purchasers of books, and for whose taste alone publishers could speculate, I think you allow continues to be fully better than ever; but there has been, and there exists at present, a

desire of knowledge and a demand for books in the middle ranks and manufacturing classes of society altogether unprecedented, to supply which will occasion a demand to fully ten times the amount of any hitherto existing.

"A leading object with me lately has been how this branch of trade could be got at—by the republication of the best literature of the day in a style suited to all classes; the result is, I have resolved to try the experiment, and shall now confidentially commit to you a general outline of the plan, which, I hope, will meet your co-operation and good opinion. I may premise, however, that at first sight you will probably not approve of it, and may express your dread whether it may not interfere with the sale of books in their present shape and condition; but my resolution has been taken after long and most deliberate thought; and I do trust that all those whose opinions are of value will, ere long, entirely embrace my views.

"My plan is to publish a work, under the title of *Constable's Miscellany*, in weekly Numbers,—two Numbers of different works every Saturday, at 1s. each,—and that the sale shall not be confined to the regular trade merely, but extend to every newsman and dealer, hawker or what not, throughout the Empire. I send you a specimen Number, with a list of the books prepared to be given in the first instance. The order of publication is not fixed, but there will be always one of Entertainment, and one of what may be termed Historical or Useful Information, appearing on same day, all of them of the purest and best description. The list, indeed, will speak for itself. It

has been made up with all the care of which I was capable, and contains materials for five years to come. Should the design meet encouragement, as I have great confidence it will, there need be no limit to its prevalency; the whole will be stereotyped, and we shall print merely as demand arises, pay cash for everything, and sell for ready money, or as nearly so as possible. The work, you will observe, is a Miscellany of *books*, not of sheet articles, and each book may form either a part of the whole, or be taken separately,—each day's publications being of two distinct works; for instance, at starting, Waverley, No. 1, and Hall's Loo-Choo, No. 2, with covers to distinguish the one from the other. Waverley will make 6 Nos., or 2 vols., Captain Hall's two works 9 Nos., or 3 vols. I propose issuing a No. of the works of the Author of Waverley every Saturday, but not in the succession or order of their original publication. For instance, Kenilworth will be the second, and Rob Roy may not be given for four years to come. In this way the Miscellany will in no degree interfere with the set-books. Indeed, the matter will so arrange as to prevent this being possible; in the Miscellany they cannot all be given in less than five years, and even then I cannot doubt there will be purchasers of *all* sizes as at present. You will remember it was my wish that what you have called the miniature edition should be so published; had it been so, we should have been supplying you with a second 5000 long ago.

"You will observe that the list contains some books not yet written, but they will all, I hope, be so within the next four years. This, perhaps, may be called a new

feature in publication; it is no doubt so; but some good has already resulted from it in the Author of Waverley having undertaken the Life of Napoleon, which originated entirely from this list. With regard to embellishments I have not yet resolved; the cover will be ornamented with a vignette of the Castle of Edinburgh, and I think of giving engraved titles, with vignettes, to each volume, using Allan's designs for the Waverley Novels, as far as they go, and obtaining new designs for all the others.

"Now, my dear Sir, with regard to the mode of introducing the Miscellany to the different degrees of purchasers, I have thought with much anxiety, and before finally fixing on any plan, of issuing advertisements or a prospectus, I wish to ascertain the state of the demand, sale, etc., for weekly publications in the leading districts of England,—in short, to get a knowledge, as far as possible, of the people engaged in *the Number trade,* as it is called, and the terms on which sales can or ought to be effected to them,—in short, I want a statistical view of the state of bookselling, and have already engaged a *most competent person* to make a journey for me, and he will set out on it in a week or two. I shall thus, I hope, have a tolerable idea of the chances of success, and whether the sales in England must be entirely through London, or only partially so. In selecting the books, I have been anxious to give as great a variety as possible, keeping religion, morals, politics, and good-feeling, in every respect, completely in view; in short, I would almost anticipate that this present, and probably *last* design of mine, will be looked upon as an object of national interest.

"I have hitherto been contriving and working for the learned, the great, and already intelligent, and feel at this moment no small portion of happiness in the prospect of being still more extensively useful, and in yet living to receive a high reward in the success of my scheme. And here I propose that my bookselling and editorial projects shall terminate.

"Although September is printed on the cover, yet the period of publication is not fixed, and must be regulated by circumstances. I know how much engaged you must be at present, and I have felt unwilling to offer you additional subjects for your thought, but I could not longer delay telling you of this undertaking, which you must take your own leisure to deliberate and consider about.

"With regard to the Life of Napoleon there is nothing fixed so far as form is concerned. I am still inclined to the plan of my last, but will not proceed without further consultation. No book has appeared in our day of an interest approaching to anything like what must infallibly attach to this, and we must endeavour to make it tell as far as possible for the wonderful author and others.—I am, my dear Sir, very truly yours, ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

It could not, I think, be expected that Messrs. Hurst, Robinson, and Co. should at once perceive the advantage that would arise to them from a plan which involved, according to their views, the immediate depreciation of works of which their stock amounted in value to £40,000; and, notwithstanding my reverence for my father's judg-

ment and experience in all matters pertaining to his craft, I cannot avert the conviction that, at least from their own point of view, they *may* have been right, and he wrong. Mr. Robinson's reply was as follows :—

"LONDON, *June* 18*th*, 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am duly in receipt of your communication respecting Constable's Miscellany. No doubt can be entertained in any person's mind as to the success of the undertaking, and certainly no doubt can exist as to its entirely destroying the sale of an immense property now in our hands, and most especially the detached works by the Author of Waverley, of which we have a stock amounting to about £8000, and above £30,000 of the set-books by the same author; to say nothing about many other works, such as Hall's South America, etc. etc., of which we lately bought quantities. I assure you I think such a publication as you now propose would *entirely ruin* this firm if persisted in, and I must beg that you will not proceed at present, for even the publication of such a prospectus as you have sent me would at once ruin the sale of the works by the Author of Waverley; and I hope you will feel that it is due to this firm to confer with us personally on the policy of your plan, before you suffer any eye to see the prospectus. On further consideration, I am sure you will see at once that our stock must be wonderfully reduced before you can proceed with your plan, and once more entreat you to take no steps without first conferring with this firm as to the proper time to announce such a plan to the public.—I am, my dear Sir, yours faithfully,

"J. O. ROBINSON."

MR. CONSTABLE to J. O. ROBINSON.

"POLTON, *Tuesday Evening, June 21st*, 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your short and rather abrupt letter, but as it has apparently been written in *a panic*, the mistaken views which it contains must be regretted and overlooked.

"I feel it quite unnecessary to say how very heedless conduct it would be in me to think of any project tending to the injury of connexions of such vast importance as yourselves, and not less anything that could prove detrimental to the works of the Author of Waverley. The Miscellany in question has no such objects in view, and cannot, in its effects, produce anything but good to all concerned.

"I am fully aware of the large interest which you hold in books by the Author of Waverley, and it would be my study and object assuredly to protect that property. The sets in various sizes have no doubt lessened the demand for the original editions. The plan of the Miscellany is not intended to add to the sets for many years to come, and as separate books will only partially fall in the way of the original editions, I would here beg leave to ask whether such plan could possibly amount to the serious injuries which your letter holds out? Each of the set-editions have found their own separate and distinct purchasers; the number of purchasers has increased with each succeeding size—these are, I think, facts which cannot be disputed. The Miscellany is for another class, who cannot afford to purchase any edition already in existence,

and who, in all probability, will never do so without some such project as that of which you complain. My idea is that all the novels, tales, and romances of the Author of Waverley at present existing, might be reprinted under the cover of the Miscellany, within four years from the starting; but there will be no difficulty in extending that period to seven years; and will the present purchasers of sets—increasing in number daily, as I think you must allow them to be—wait so long for the Miscellany, or cheapest editions? This I do maintain, and nothing will alter my opinion, short of actual experience, and that, I now most decidedly say, will not be seen in my day or in yours. I beg to assert further that my new plan will not interfere to lessen the sale of the original editions to the amount of five per cent. per annum of your present stock, the sale of which, under any circumstance, appears to be so inconsiderable.

"As mentioned in my last, neither the books which the Miscellany is to contain, nor the period of commencing it, is finally fixed. I wished to communicate the whole plans to you in the fullest manner, before announcing them in any way; as to this my letter of the 15th will bear the fullest testimony. It would give me the greatest pleasure to confer fully with your firm on every point relative to this most important of all undertakings in which I have been or am ever likely to be concerned. The design, up to the present period, has not in any manner, been made public; but its title having been seen in the hands of printers, the project has ceased to be a secret; and I think when you have reconsidered the

whole affair, the most formidable of your objections must vanish. The whole matter has long had the most decided attention from me, and I will yet see whether the list cannot be modelled to allay (what I must call) your groundless fears. You will receive, enclosed, a proof of the printed notice, which I intended should accompany the list of books, and of this there are only two copies yet printed. Had circumstances enabled me to leave home, we should have had conferences on this subject months ago, but as I see no prospect of my being in London before August, I beseech you to favour me more fully with your objections in writing, trusting they will be arguments, not theoretical assertions. I repeat again how fully sensible I am of the magnitude of your stock of the works of the Author of Waverley, and request you to believe that it is farthest from my thoughts to contemplate anything injurious to their sale, or opposed to your opinion of what is proper, as far as I possibly can avoid doing so.

"I will do all that is in my power to regulate the publication to our mutual benefit, but abandoned it cannot be; indeed, I look forward to the result of it as not the least productive harvest in a life of some enterprise and no little anxiety. You may sell some copies fewer of Waverley and others in a detached shape; the evils you dread will rest here. Has the octavo suffered from the foolscap edition? and have both or either suffered by the miniature? but these are all for the higher classes of the people, and cannot be injured by the new project.—Yours, etc., ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

My father's eloquence having failed to convince his correspondent, on the 8th of July he received the following reply:—

"CLAPHAM, *July* 5, 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I should have replied to your favour of the 21st ultimo some days ago, but I wished to give every possible consideration to the important question now before us; and however abrupt you might consider my former letter, which was certainly written under considerable feeling at the extraordinary proposal you had communicated, yet mature consideration, and consultation with my partner and our *mutual* friend Mr. Thomas Hurst, has only most fully and decidedly confirmed the opinion I conveyed in my former letter; and however decided you may be in your opinion that the publication of the proposed Miscellany would not be a serious injury to us, I assure you I am no less decided that it would be not only injurious, *but much beyond that;* indeed, it is difficult to say what might be the result of such a *depreciation* of such an *important property.*

"We hold nearly, if not upwards of, £40,000 stock of the works of the Author of Waverley; and do you think it possible, under these circumstances, that I can be made to believe that the weekly publication of these works in Numbers, at about one-third or one-fourth the price of our present stock, would not be injurious? This is really so plain a matter that I dare not venture to remark much upon it, because I would not willingly either write or speak one sentiment to hurt your feelings; but I may, in justice to the firm I represent, ask you one plain question

—Would you propose such a work as your present Miscellany if you held all the stock we do, not only of the works of the Author of Waverley, but the works of Sir Walter Scott and others, to which I shall refer in this letter? You need only give due consideration to this, and the matter will be settled at once by the integrity of your own mind, which I am sure will dictate to you that the plan should be withdrawn, and afterwards adjusted in conformity with our stock, according to the honour and *usage* of the trade, and in conformity with a *specific* contract *dictated* by yourself, and in the same handwriting as this epistle, and I may further add, a contract referring only to the miniature editions, which produced you above £10,000 net.

"The next important part of our stock which your proposed publication would materially injure is the 12mo and the miniature edition of Scott's Poetry; but since others are interested in this property, we might safely leave them to look after their own interest, which would at once prevent, if I am not greatly mistaken, the introduction of these works into the Miscellany.

"I should no less object to the introduction of the following works, of which we hold a large stock, some of which have been purchased within a few months, say Hall's Travels, Millot's Elements, Tour in Germany, and Arrowsmith's Atlas.

"Your proposed Miscellany has already been announced, no doubt without your authority, in the Gazette of Literature, but I think it should never have been submitted to a printer, or the secret of your plan divulged to any one,

without our concurrence. You ask me if the publication of the 12mo edition of the set-books by the Author of Waverley injured the sale of the octavos? to which I reply, Most certainly it did; and the miniature injured both 12mo and octavo. I do not, however, mean to say that, on the whole, we have not made more profits by having three editions than if we had only had the octavo, but if no other edition than the octavo had been published, a great quantity more would have been sold of that edition than under the existing circumstance of our having other two editions. You remark that your present plan will not interfere with the sale of the original editions to the amount of 5 per cent.; now, my good sir, allow me to ask you who will buy Waverley at 21s. while you are selling it for 6s.? and our regular sale of this work averages 200 per annum, at 12s. and 14s. to the trade. The same applies to Guy Mannering and The Antiquary, and some others;—indeed, my good sir, you are altogether in the wrong, and your plan must rest for a few years.

"I hope I need not say I am always ready to forward all your plans and wishes of every kind, when I can do so with a proper regard to the magnitude of our own engagements; and deeply do I regret that your opinion and mine are so much at variance on this important point; but I feel it a duty I owe to my partners, as well as myself, to be thus explicit with you, and say positively, that your list must be materially altered,—indeed, that you must not only omit, but not even refer to, the Waverley Novels and other books of which we hold a large stock. I have no doubt, after due consideration, you will view the matter

as I do, and in a few years we may go most cordially into your plan. In the meantime, be assured it always gives me great satisfaction to concur with you in all matters of business, and I am, with much respect, my dear Sir, yours faithfully, J. O. ROBINSON."

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. ROBINSON.

"EDINBURGH, *8th July* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—On coming to town this morning Mr. Cadell put into my hands your letter of the 5th, from which I find we are not likely to agree in opinion as to the entire safety of your stock of the novels and romances of the Author of Waverley. If the plan of including them in the intended Miscellany should be followed up, I therefore feel it due to all concerned to lose no time in stating explicitly that the works of the Author of Waverley, from Waverley to Quentin Durward inclusive, shall be excluded from any list or advertisement of said Miscellany at present.

"I believe, with the exception of Hall's South America, every other work in the stock of which you or any one else has an interest has been withdrawn from the list, including Russell's Travels.

"My intention is not to do harm, but to do good. If the friends with whom I have been acting, and wish to act, do not see things at all times in the same point of view as I do, I acknowledge my sincere regret that it should be so, and shall be most willing to render similar acknowledgments in changing any of my business plans whenever I can be satisfied of the utility of the change.

"The plan of the Miscellany was exclusively submitted to you, but not till after it had had the best consideration I was capable of giving it, and I repeat again, I am still convinced you will ere long view everything concerning it in the manner I do myself; at least such is my conviction, but I will presume to use no further argument to satisfy you of this. You have no doubt the power of preventing our printing Waverley, etc., but it would be unworthy of this house, and certainly unlike its professions, to do anything of an injurious tendency towards your concern, supposing the power entirely in our own hands; words, however, are only words, and on this subject you shall not have more of them from me.

"The Miscellany, as I said in a former letter, cannot be abandoned, and its success with the public will not depend, I hope, on our not giving Waverley till it shall better suit all our purposes. Agreements are unnecessary to be looked at when the stake is to such a magnitude as is mentioned in the letter now before me. The Miscellany is, I expect, destined to long life, and we can work only on free materials in the meantime.—I am, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE.

"*P.S.*—I find I can send you an uncorrected proof of the prospectus in its present, and I trust final, state. You will observe The Crusaders named in it, which will be given under any circumstance, and you will also see there is no pledge as to the time for the appearance of any other of the published works of our great Author."

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. ROBINSON.

"EDINBURGH, *9th July* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Your letter of the 6th reached me in due course, but from the contents of my letter of yesterday, and previous long despatches, it does not seem necessary to trouble you at present with any long reply.

"Hall's South America and The Crusaders are now the only books retained in the list of the Miscellany of which you have any stock, and it is proposed to commence with these works. It will ere long be ascertained how far your sale of the same has been interfered with. I now beg to say that whatever the loss by that interference may amount to, it shall be made up to you, either by the books remaining being taken back,—say twelve months hence, or by some other satisfactory mode not inconsistent with the usages and honour of the trade.

"You remark in a postscript to your letter that you never refused to publish the novels and tales in Numbers (*Parts*), as originally designed they should be. I have not said you ever did refuse,—I have only observed that you adopted your own views and not mine; but this can soon be rectified, as you have all the liberty originally given you to do so; still further, there is no facility or assistance in my power, consistent with the honour and usage of the trade, or even *northern* liberality, that you may not instantly command in carrying the first idea successfully into effect should circumstances yet induce you to entertain such. The original undertaking was a spirited one on your part, and most advantageous to us,

for which you have long had my thanks, and still shall have my gratitude.

"Now, good sir, in reply to your question, 'Whether, if possessing the stock which you do, I would have thought of republishing the works enumerated in your letter?' I forbear all remark, but at once tell you, I ASSUREDLY WOULD.—I am, my dear Sir, yours truly,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE.

"*P.S.*—Instead of being a preventive—possessing such a stock would be an additional and urgent inducement."

(*This P.S. not added in the letter sent.*)

MR. ROBINSON to MESSRS. CONSTABLE AND CO.

"LONDON, *July* 11*th*, 1825.

"MY DEAR SIRS,—I feel greatly relieved by your decision as to the Miscellany, and if it were not that I think you would consider me as interfering with your matters, I should say, while I approve your plan, yet I think the *selection* of books might be greatly improved, and I am sure it would be greatly to your advantage *not* to introduce The Crusaders. You may make *double* the money *of it in other ways*, and I say this because I have some practical experience of what class of books the Number-people sell; and I am sure many works that are not copyright would sell much better than the works of the great Author; indeed, they are adapted only for the higher class of readers, not for the labouring class; and you should also keep in mind that your 1s. No. will not net you 6d. The profits which this class of periodical vendors require is what you may be unacquainted with,

and I am very certain you may make a selection of works that will answer *every purpose* without touching your own *copyrights.* This is of great importance, and I am certain it is the fact.—I am, my dear Sirs, yours truly,

"J. O. ROBINSON.

"You may perhaps gather some ideas from the following statement:—Stevens published the History of the Wars of the French Revolution in two vols. quarto, and it died almost as soon as it appeared, and some years after it was made into waste paper. Baines of Leeds republished it during my residence in Leeds, and circulated through the hawkers above 20,000 copies in 6d. Nos.; but, if my memory is correct, Davies and Booth and other great hawkers only paid Baines 2½d. per No. When I was at Leeds, and during my abode at Leeds, I saw much of the concerns of Davies and Booth, who were the greatest people in this line out of London, and they generally considered that 2d. was as much as they could afford for 6d. Nos., but on account of the popularity of Baines's book they gave him 2½d."

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. ROBINSON.

"POLTON HOUSE, *24th Sept.* 1825,
Saturday evening.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am duly in receipt of your letter, and regret that we are not yet quite at one in regard to the Miscellany, but I have no doubt we are to be so ere long. The prospectus, as you will have seen, is now committed to the public, and I mean to use every active exertion to make it as universally known as

possible. I expect to commence issuing on 1st January next, as you shall hear more at length when we meet, which I hope will be about the 6th October—Thursday week. If you have anything to say before I leave home, a letter in course would reach me here. I go by the west road. Sir Walter Scott has requested I would make Abbotsford the first stage, which I intend to do. I am now a helpless old fellow, and must take a man-servant along with me.

"With regard to my stay in London, my wish is to be at home within a month from the time I leave this. Indeed, I cannot think of a longer absence, and I daresay you will think you have enough of me, limited as I propose my visit to be, though I really do not know that I shall have any bargains to sell you, having retired from that line of business; but we shall have no want of subjects to talk about, and I expect to have great pleasure in seeing your new and vast establishment.—In the meantime, with best compliments to Mr. Hurst, I am, my dear Sir, yours faithfully, ARCHD. CONSTABLE."

CHAPTER XVIII.

My father visits London—Correspondence with his partner regarding request of Robinson for extensive pecuniary assistance—Money matters look very ill—Bankers in alarm—Mr. Dixon remonstrates—"Napoleon" stopped, and Woodstock begun—Injurious report from London—Letter from my father on the subject.

EARLY in October my father visited London, chiefly for the purpose of arranging preliminaries for the publication of the Miscellany, and he writes on the 10th to Mr. Cadell as follows:—"As to the Miscellany, I am glad to say, nothing can promise better. Our friends here have got a new light as to it, and will do all they can to forward my wishes. . . . . I observe your P.S. as to discounts,[1] which I understand are also difficult here at present, but Robinson says the thing must pass over immediately. If I learn anything of importance on this matter I shall let you know."

Mr. Cadell writes from Edinburgh on the same day as follows:—

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

"EDINBURGH, 10*th Oct.* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have this moment had a call from

[1] Mr. Cadell had stated, "Some of the banks here are now taking 5 per cent. above six months, but it is not general; the opinion is that it will not last long."

James Ballantyne, with a letter from Sir Walter in his hand, stating that he has just finished the first volume of his Life of Buonaparte, which is wholly occupied with a retrospect of the French Revolution, and he adds, 'There are to be four more—*five* in all.' Ballantyne's call was to suggest the question to you, 'Should this make any change in the mode of bringing out the book?' It is now clear that Sir Walter is laying a broad foundation, and that he will make a great book. Is not *five* volumes, post size, too much? So very great an extension in the number of volumes carries the book, I fear, out of many readers' hands, and I question if half the number in this size will go to the circulating libraries. Under this view of the matter, will it not be more prudent to make the work in four stout octavos, *demy?* Thinking that your ideas might change with so important a change in size, I have written to Cowan not to make any post till further orders, and it will be well to know your views about it soon, for James Ballantyne expects to start without any delay.—I am, yours truly, ROB. CADELL."

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. CADELL.

"LONDON, 15*th October* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Sir Walter mentioned to me when at Abbotsford the chance of a fifth volume, and mentioned something as to the introductory part—which he showed me—forming a separate publication, which I said decidedly would be a very bad plan, and I thought he was not to propose it. Four volumes would doubtless be more saleable than five volumes; but he must do in this

just as suits him. A historical work may bear an additional volume, though with a work of romance it might be otherwise, and I would certainly not alter the plan of our entire publication. Mr. Lockhart, who is here at present, tells me he has read the introductory chapter, and that it is most admirable. Shall I write to Sir Walter on the subject?

"Mr. Robinson spoke to me yesterday in Waterloo Place about a large accommodation for three and four months. I did not at the moment altogether see the bearings of it, and requested he would write to you on the subject. On due consideration, I am decidedly of opinion it would not suit in the way he proposed, and I have told him so. You are at the helm, and can do whatever is suitable and useful to both. There certainly is a great change here at present, but Mr. Dixon, whom I have just seen, does not think it will last, but recommends caution. I went to him in consequence of the enclosed. The chief part of the balance arises from Glyn and Co. not having paid £1300 advised, etc., to be done on the 13th. This is very awkward, and I hope the mistake is at Glyn's. I am to call at Dixon and Co.'s on Monday, and shall see whether it is then cleared up. Mr. Dixon very generally observed that the amount of our drafts was at present larger than usual. I have told Robinson of this, and that what we have done for him is the cause of it. I would not use Mr. Carstairs but for our own purposes. Our friend J. O. R.'s demand was, I think, a large one.—Yours truly, ARCH. CONSTABLE."

Mr. Cadell's opinion on this subject coincided with my father's:—

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

"EDINBURGH, 17*th Oct.* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I write to-day on account of a letter I have from Robinson about cash, which has put me completely out of sorts, as I am utterly at a loss what to do. He says, Draw £10,000 on Dixon and Co., and £10,000 on Carstairs, *and remit to me in course.* He might as well say, Draw the same sums on the Bank of England. It was only on Wednesday that we increased Carstairs above £2000 for ourselves in consequence of repeated refusals at the various banks. His account is very high (£12,000). As to Brooks and Co., it is higher just now than ever it was (£16,500), and they gave us a growl the other day. It would be madness to do what Robinson says—I mean to the extent; absolute madness. It would utterly demolish our own credit; and, by the way, as you know, Brooks and Co. were increased largely lately for Robinson himself.

"We cannot get one shilling of London from Sandy Smith; if we could, I might have taken £2000 on credit, and got it paid somehow. His want has compelled me to assail Dickinson to meet our bills at Brooks and Co., also Hood's for a small bill. We have to provide Brooks and Co. with £14,700 in November, and God only knows how it is to be got! They have refused us discount just now, but I have asked for a little in November in order to help us.

"Such is our exact state, and not from our own engagements, but to aid J. O. R. *Had we not done so much already for Robinson,* we could *have done a great deal just now,* but having *done a great deal already,* it is *wholly impracticable to do much just now.*

"There is nothing that I would not do for our friend; the amount is of no consequence, but to do it with caution and prudence is the rub. I have not been so much annoyed for a long time as at our inability to do all Robinson wishes. I must really have a day's consideration of the matter.—I am, dear Sir, yours truly,

"ROB. CADELL."

In my father's letter of the 18th there is the following passage:—"Money matters here are not very easy with people in business. No discounts but at short dates, and of the first rate. Our friends H., R., and Co. have enough on hand in this way, but their credit stands very high, and few large concerns stand better; but their request of last week was rather a large one, and I will not feel any disappointment that you think so, and that whatever is to be done should be through other means. Nothing can be added to Dixon and Co. at present; we should rather, *were it possible,* reduce than increase such accounts. I have said all this to Robinson, who is quite prepared to do without the accommodation."

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

"EDINBURGH, 18*th Oct.* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—How completely my letter of yesterday has anticipated your sentiments about Robinson's

accommodation, as expressed in your letter of the 15th, received this morning; and how fortunate it is that I did not increase Dixon and Co.'s account! As I stated yesterday, nothing but stark staring incompetency would have caused me to do what Robinson wanted; in fact, it would have demolished us utterly.

"I have been uneasy for some days about Dixon and Co., in consequence of D. Smith and Co. having little or no London funds. Smith said as much the other day, in the way of doubt of his account in London standing the £1400 (not £1300) advised on the 13th. On applying this morning I find it would be paid on the 17th positively, and the delay has arisen from their downright poverty of funds at Glyn and Co.'s. As I stated to you yesterday, and as your letter anticipates, Robinson is the sole cause of our account with Dixon and Co. being so high, and it is hard to suffer in our desire to oblige others; with Carstairs it would be equally foolish to overstrain; were we to do so, where would be our berth in the event of being put in a corner ourselves? There is nothing that I would not do to do Robinson all the good in our power; but at present I see no practicable plan without endangering our own safety. I know well that Robinson and we are one and the same in some points of view, and the mutual credit of both must be maintained; but after what we have done, more, at this moment, is past our power. Robinson will be nearly prepared for this by my letter of yesterday, and Brooks and Co.'s note to you sets the matter at rest. . . . .

"ROBT. CADELL."

My father writes on the 20th:—"I have just had the pleasure of your letter, and have read that to Robinson, which was quite right. His request could not with any propriety be attempted at present. I need not say a word to you on the subject, being satisfied you will look to home, which is very much our good friend Mr. Joseph's own plan. The present appearance of things is certainly very different from last year at the same period, and it will most likely be January before we see much improvement. The book-trade thrives meantime beyond any former period. Longman and Co. had a most successful sale, more so than they have ever had."

On the 22d October Mr. Cadell wrote from Edinburgh:—"You would find all right at Brooks and Co., but I assure you it would have been the height of folly to have done what Robinson wanted. J. O. R. cares nothing *but for home.* I have seen that long long, and after telling us not to have any connexion with Key, it is barely fair to make us ask favours for himself, but one must allow a great deal at a pinch, and a financier in a corner does not stick at trifles to meet the day and the way."

From London, my father replied on the 24th October:—"I had no doubt we should be entirely at one as to Robinson's request. They have certainly immense payments, but they have great resources to meet them. I shall tell you all I think as to these matters at meeting. I suspect the Print concern absorbs a great deal of ready money, though no doubt profitable; but H., R., and Co.'s purchases in every way have been large, and they have

a large stock. There certainly never was property in the hands of any one where more real activity and very fair judgment were at work than in this concern. As to their finance, I see clearly that there must be no dependence on their getting anything from Scotland discounted for the next two months to come, short of banker's paper. This does not apply alone to them, but to every one in trade at the present moment. Rothschild's operations and Joint-Stock Companies are said to be the great cause of this. H., R., and Co. have not above one-third of the sum on discount at present at Glyn and Co. as last year at this season, and they have nevertheless been requested to get all they can elsewhere.

"I think it would be well if Sir Walter would take some charge of the bills to himself and Ballantyne and Co. for the next two months. He should ask Coutts and Co. here, and Sir William Forbes and Co. in Edinburgh, for good round sums. Any dishonour at Currie's would play the very mischief. I think it right to give these hints, which, I am convinced, would produce good if acted upon."

October 26.—"Matters appear to grow worse in regard to money, I think. The Bank of England is said to be limiting the discounts daily. The booksellers, so far as I hear, all stand firm, and Mr. Thomas Hurst told me on Sunday that they never experienced more regular payments, both in town and country, than at present. I do not hear that our friends of this house have ever such a thing as a returned bill, which I assure you is very pleasing."

"*Very Private.*—I understand the visit of John Gibson Lockhart to London was a literary one, and that he is to be editor of the Quarterly Review. This I have no doubt is a wise measure on both sides. The Quarterly has been considered as falling for some time—the Number which has just appeared is a very dull one. J. G. L. goes to the English bar."

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

"EDINBURGH, 28*th Oct.* 1825.

". . . James Campbell is likely perhaps to say something to you about a draft I have sent to him on H., R., and Co. for two bills due in November. I have no doubt he will be able to manage it. It will relieve so much Brooks and Co., so as to send it to Robinson and Co., whose bills in November are heavy. I think before the 20th we shall have as much Brooks and Co. free as give them £3000.

"Brooks and Co. had little reason for demurring about bill for £1000 the other day—if they really did so, but our letter may have been mislaid. By sundry measures, our drafts on them are all covered up to 12th November, which is a great matter, as the month, owing to our aid to H., R., and Co., is very large. We have still, however, about £8000 to send them. . . ."

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. CADELL.

October 31.—"I was in Abchurch Lane to-day. Mr. Carstairs is at Ramsgate. I saw Mr. Cheape, who said the Joint-Stock Companies had done a great deal of mischief, and would do more. On my way I called at Dixon and Co.'s, where I hoped, from the amount of your

remittances, to find matters improved. I regret to say I found them far from it. Mr. D. said the amount of the accounts must be reduced—that *their own credit* was at stake—the old drafts not paid when new ones were presented would never do. He said he was just about sending for me to have a conversation on the subject. These increases for H., R., and Co. have alone occasioned this. I am to call again to-morrow, when I shall write you fully all that passes. There is a general *distrust* at the present moment with everybody. I have *fixed* to leave London on Friday morning, and I hope to see you in Princes Street on Monday. I might have remained here longer, but I dread cold, and besides, I should like to be at head-quarters."

November 1.—"As I mentioned in my letter of yesterday, I called again on Mr. Dixon this morning, and had a short conversation with him. He showed me your letter of the 28th, and had received all the payments therein referred to, covering drafts, and a note to Sir James Mackintosh up to the 12th; this is all well, and I must say meritoriously done. Mr. D. was extremely out of humour yesterday about the amount of our drafts, and the *pell-mell* mode of new ones succeeding the old. The amounts, he remarked, carried accommodation on the face of them, and might injure the credit of their house—spoke of Mr. Langdale as new in the business—of the whole of our securities being generally on one name now, and so forth. I told him I had come to London entirely for selling operations, and one of my chief aims was to divide a little of our business; that I had succeeded in some measure in doing so; that H., R., and Co. were

persons of large capital, and most active in their mode of doing business. He said they must not, however, consider that they can have the same extent of credit as such an old-established house as Longmans'—that it was not wise for ourselves,—in short, that our drafts must be brought back to the old standard, or as much under it as we possibly could till times improved, as he trusted they would do,—he said at the rate of £2000 a month till the account was at £8000 or so, and that the commencement should be made now.

"I stated the whole to J. O. R., and proposed making them a further cash payment this morning, which J. O. R. enabled me to do. In short, without this the matter would not have been smooth, and he might have refused the drafts. The £2000 was an acceptance of Wentworth and Co., bankers, drawn by J. Hurst, Wakefield, 25th Oct., indorsed by him to H., R., and Co., the proceeds, I believe, of some bills discounted by the Wakefield Bank. This operation seemed entirely to satisfy Mr. Dixon. I said then, a draft p. £1800, which he showed me was due on the 15th, would be considered as provided for, and not to be redrawn; or, as I stated to him, perhaps it might be more convenient to reduce the drafts portionally than obliterate such a large one at once. He said, 'You engage to reduce £2000 monthly, and I am satisfied;' and thus we parted very good friends. You have the receipt enclosed. He said our cash balance was large enough at present, and he would discount and apply the £2000 only when it was required.

"The state of this matter is plainly this—Money is

very difficult to be procured, and, as Mr. Dixon observed, they were hard pressed by everybody. Now, my dear sir, I have done my best. I have given you a very full detail, and shall talk it over at meeting; but the accounts must be reduced as Mr. D. stipulated, or he will not be pleased, and may refuse our drafts some day. He explained as to the £1000: it was merely from the want of a letter of advice.

"Hurst, Robinson, and Co. must get as few drafts on Dixon as possible, and when they do get them they should be in smaller sums. I have cautioned J. O. R. about not indorsing them, which he is to be very careful not to do for the future. As to replacing the £2000, you can judge. H., R., and Co. have got a great lift out of the ordinary channel, but they have much still to do before January. Large sums are awkward things to meet in bad times like the present. Mr. Dixon said times would mend; the exchange was now in favour of England, and gold plenty. This also was Mr. Cheape's remark yesterday."

The efforts of Mr. Cadell to keep matters straight were unremitting and judicious. He writes on November 5th to my father, who had left London as he intended, on the 3d instant, and returned to Polton House:—

"The banks are quiet—the private bankers as poor as rats. I have by every exertion tried to get as much in London as I could, to meet November, so as to save double transactions—such as buying here, etc., then discounting to pay. All my London plans have succeeded.

"What I have now to state will surprise you. Sir

Walter has been stopped in the second volume of Boney by the want of *some important facts*, and has begun a novel—'Woodstock: a Tale of the Long Parliament,' which is to be ready in February. Notwithstanding this, Boney is to go on, and six sheets of vol. i. are in type. He says to James Ballantyne, 'It will not stop long, and with the Court hours I shall do both easily, and add £3000 per annum to my income.' Tommy Moore was here to-day with Mr. Jeffrey. He is at Craigcrook."

Fatigue and anxiety had so affected my father, that, after his return from London, he was for some time confined to bed, and, as his residence was six miles distant from Edinburgh, intercourse with his partner, at a time when it ought to have been constant, was sadly interrupted. Mr. Cadell was much startled and discomposed one day by a call from Sir Walter Scott, who told him that he had received alarming information from London of the precarious condition of Messrs. Hurst, Robinson, and Co., and indeed that my father had left London hurriedly in consequence of his banker having "thrown up his book." Of Sir Walter's midnight visit to Polton, recorded by Mr. Lockhart,[1] strange to say I find no notice whatever, and on the 18th November, the date of his call on Mr. Cadell, Sir Walter was resident in Edinburgh. The following extract from a letter, probably written after a personal interview with my father, shows that Mr. Cadell had at once and correctly guessed the source of the alarming rumour, and that he was fully alive to the necessity for checking it, were that still possible:—

[1] See Life, vol. vi. p. 106. Mr. Lockhart gives no date.

"FRIDAY, 18*th November* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I got so ill, I may say, before getting to the end of my letter to Robinson, that I could not write over again to you what I have said to him, and you may suppose that I have felt uneasy all day. I am going to see Sir Walter again before I go to dinner. I will not press him for his informant, but I wish to know *if the informant* can do any harm to us here. I shall, if practicable, see you on Sunday, and before I close this may have something to say in addition. I explained most distinctly the Hop transaction."

"GEORGE STREET, *Friday evening.*

"I resolved to see Sir Walter again, but before doing so went to Ballantyne and told him all that had happened, and asked him if I should go again to Sir Walter. He approved most highly, and I have just been with him. I apologized for again troubling him, but I was so confident that I knew who told him, that I said, 'I do not think, Sir Walter, that you will think the worse of me for asking, not your authority, but if your authority will propagate the rumour.' He at once owned *that it was by letter*, that the prominent point insisted on was the banker, and that as to that and everything else he had, also by letter, given the most faithful account of *what he had seen* in Mr. Dixon's letter, and what he knew by our paying him £2100, which we had only to ask time on to get at once, but which we had not whispered at. Now, I fancy John Gibson L—— is the informant, and no other person. Sir Walter said that the information was given kindly to him, and with all kindness to us. He might easily have said

something to Sir Walter without insisting on every point as stated being true.—I am, my dear Sir, yours truly,

"R. CADELL."

To this letter my father replied as follows :—

"POLTON, 19*th November* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—The affairs of this life are composed of a mixture of good and evil, as your enclosures of this morning decidedly show. You have done what was quite right in regard to explanations and your letter to Robinson. There is just one point which I am anxious about, and you will oblige me much by doing what I am now about to request,—that you offer Sir Walter Scott, if he will read them, all my letters to you from the day I arrived in London till the time I left it, and they will show whether any of my proceedings were abrupt; at all events, I think Sir Walter will not refuse to look at one letter in particular, fixing the exact day when I proposed setting out; I think it will be found that I very nearly kept to my time; and it is at all events known to you that I did not leave London without accomplishing the business which carried me there,—arrangements as to the Miscellany.

"My calls on Mr. Dixon were not connected with money negotiations, having left all these in your hands, and about their safety I never had a moment's dread, but to inquire for him as an old and steady friend, and to show the establishment the respect due to it, that my health was restored, etc. My communications to you of what passed are, I believe, pretty full. Our account was

larger than usual, and it was mutually agreed on both sides should be reduced within the next four months as near the common standard as we found convenient, which I knew to be your wish as well as my own; but there was no proposition of shutting accounts. I hope we parted on very different terms; indeed, I never left London at any time more satisfied of the certainty of our banker's account standing on the firmest foundation,—their holding no securities but of the very best description.

"As to H., R., and Co. there was doubtless a good deal of conversation. I did not feel myself called upon to explain all I knew of their affairs, but I said this, and will repeat it, that my confidence in the house was *unshaken*, as you know it to be. It distresses me greatly, however, that such reports should get abroad. I will not hazard a conjecture in writing, but I think I can point out to you the source from whence all this flows. God forgive the inventors of evil, who grow rather more numerous than one could wish! I entreat of you to explain to Sir Walter that my leaving London in any abrupt way is utterly false. It was known to most of my friends that I was to leave London about the 3d of November, for fully a week previous to that date; some of them perhaps were disappointed that I did not remain to give them more meat and drink. *They* might consider my departure abrupt, but no one with whom I had any business to transact will make any such allegation. I send purposely to town with this; I dictate this in bed. Had I been able to sit up I should not have used the pen of another on an occasion like the present, but I cannot avoid it.

"I hope you will let me see you here to-morrow, if but for half-an-hour, when I shall be prepared as to The Cook's Oracle and other matters.

"I find I shall require James Shaw's assistance here on Monday, if he can come out in the morning, that I may have a long day of *his pen.* We must apply to Mr. Huie, and have the additions made to Arrowsmith.—I am, my dear Sir, truly yours, ARCHD. CONSTABLE.

"The people in the shop are very irregular in sending me out the newspapers. I have only got two *Morning Chronicles* this week. I want the *Courant* of Monday last."

CHAPTER XIX.

Correspondence of my father and Mr. Cadell anent measures for security—Sir Walter Scott's assistance proposed—Extracts from "Life," and from Sir Walter's private Journal, not quoted by Mr. Lockhart—Commercial gloom increasing—Dishonoured Bills returned—Plan of Mr. Cadell for raising money.

THE breaks in the continuity of correspondence between Mr. Cadell and my father at this exciting period could only be filled by their conversation at meeting, of which unfortunately I possess no record; but their letters manifest complete agreement as to the steps necessary or desirable to be taken. On the 22d November the following letters passed between them:—

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. CADELL.

"POLTON, 22*d Nov.* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have this instant your letter, with Robinson's, which is what I have been looking for for some days. I have just tried whether I could, WITH ANY SAFETY, attempt walking or moving about so as to go to town and consult with you, but I find I must not attempt it. To-morrow I hope I shall be stronger, and see you, which you cannot doubt I have deep anxiety to do.

"For this day deliberate, and let us be prepared to see Sir Walter Scott to-morrow. Perhaps you had as well enclose or give him Robinson's letter, and just plump the

question as to £10,000 through his influence, provided it can be without explanations to *banks*, which would ruin all. It must be in the way of two bonds, say £5000 each, Sir Walter getting Robinson's acceptances for the whole, their security and ours also to the bonds. Might not Mr. Kermack manage one of them, and Mr. Gibson-Craig the other? but I would not make a movement of *any kind* with regard to *the last* just yet, nor till we see what can be done in another quarter, as the affair must be kept a secret from the banks. Perhaps Provost Henderson might lend a lift to Sir Walter Scott, ourselves, and Hurst, Robinson, and Co., on an explanation—only that all that goes on there *at first* will be talked about. We can make very different explanations to Sir Walter than to any one else, his interest and knowledge being very different. The acceptances indorsed by T. H. would have great weight, and will be got, I doubt not.

"On the whole, if it be possible, I would like to see you here in the evening, if but for AN HOUR, to concert measures for to-morrow. Do try this. I have no doubt Sir Walter could get £5000 at the *New Bank*,—half now and half next month, as if a natural transaction.

"As to H., R., and Co. I have no ACTUAL DREAD, unless half the trade stop. They have heavy payments to us in December, from 1st to 15th, about £5000, and we have £2000 on the 7th as per list Robinson gave me.

"I have been ruminating and casting in my mind as to Dixon and the reports, and I think I could now repeat every syllable that passed between us. There was one thing he observed in the first conversation. When talk-

ing of all ONE NAME, he said he might give a collateral security, such as the insurances they paid annually. We then went into the reduction of the account, and next day, when the reduction, etc., was fixed, I asked if all would now be as he wished. He said yes; he wanted a reduction for the sake of comfort. Now, in order to keep our account there QUITE STRONG—and it is of first-rate importance it be so—I would send him the Rock policy on my life. Indeed, I am not quite certain whether he may not be expecting it. You know Mr. Dixon's quiet way of speaking; and if you agree with me I would send it immediately, and then ask him for the deposit bills as the drafts are diminished, leaving to him to send back or retain what he liked best. Now, my dear friend, this piece of finance is necessary on a full interpretation of Mr. Dixon's words and manner. It may be expected, and we must run no hazards of losing ground in that quarter. I don't think I mentioned this in my letters, but now that the storm increases I shall be quite unhappy till it is done.

"With regard to anything in my power personally, I shall of course exert every nerve. I have cash to borrow to pay the new buildings, and the property stands so that it would not bear £100 more. I am very anxious to ascertain how the banks here continue affected. Write me two lines, and say whether you are to speak to Sir Walter Scott, and if I am to see you this evening. I wrote a few lines to Robinson yesterday, and shall write again to-day, merely in terms of comfort and kindness.

I said yesterday that our UNITED efforts, influence, and skill would be used for him.

"If Robinson keep Glyn and Co. right, and if all continues well with us and Dixon, there is not so much to dread; but either going wrong would be the first approach of ruin. I have no doubt you will not say a word to Mr. Gibson-Craig till after it is ascertained what Sir Walter can do. I could give you many reasons for this, but all I daresay will strike yourself. I am quite aware of your present difficult task, and do most deeply lament that Fate has arranged so as to prevent my being at your elbow at this moment, as I trust I shall be to-morrow at this time.—Yours sincerely, ARCHD. CONSTABLE.

"*Half-past ten.*

"What you have said to Robinson was all quite proper, and what you propose doing for him is, I am sure, all that you can with any propriety do."

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

"*Private.*

"134 GEORGE STREET, *Tuesday morning, 22d Nov., Half-past Five o'clock.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—I wrote to you last night with Robinson's letter. I have had no rest all night, my fears are so great; and I assure you I see no other way than our making a most gigantic exertion to relieve J. O. R., and make ourselves snug. I am quite clear that we must make an immediate communication to Sir Walter Scott; perhaps he can aid us; and after what has passed betwixt him and me, J. O. R.'s letter is nothing extraordinary, for the very reports Sir Walter heard, Robinson

alludes to, and I told Sir Walter that these very reports might bring about the embarrassments dreaded.

"I would suggest, in addition, that Mr. Gibson-Craig be consulted, for as our existence rests on Robinson, it is our bounden duty to ourselves, to our families, and to our characters, to make every exertion to aid him, and keep our own matters right. I would sacrifice nothing, but I would consider what securities we could put into Mr. Gibson's hands, so as to induce him to give his powerful aid for £10,000 or thereby—not a groat less will do. We have sent J. O. R., and are to send him, all our tangible funds; I would try by something extra to replace them, and send Robinson £5000 further—no two-penny-halfpenny matter will now do.

"I have again written to J. O. R., and suggested his sending us some indorsed trade bills, or four promissory-notes for £2500 each, and, if practicable, with Mr. Thos. Hurst's indorsation.

"If you cannot come in to-day, send me Robinson's letter, and your remarks and suggestions. I may mention to you that we have no money. We have, I regret to say, been borrowing at all hands. We must, as I said to you on Sunday, set to work to-day, and get cash where we can. I am full of doubts and fears on this score.

"I am clear that we should, in candour to Sir W. Scott, let him know how Robinson stands. If we don't, he might say, 'Why did you not tell me? I could have given you some aid.' It is a curious circumstance that I wrote to Jas. B. yesterday afternoon, with a note how I thought he should manage December payments, and stated

J. O. R.'s name for £2000 in three bills, so that my feelings about No. 5 Pall Mall were pure before the letter received last night came to hand."

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

"EDINBURGH, 22*d November* 1825.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Sir Walter and Ballantyne were here an hour to-day, thinking yourself or a message might pop in, but till just now (two o'clock) there were no tidings. Sir Walter is bearing the matter like a bold, good man, but, of course, is diffident of saying that he can do anything till he sees what Jas. Ballantyne and Co. do in their cash matters. I regret your letter is not such as I can show him. I wish it had been. I asked Ballantyne at once if he thought £5000 could be managed; he could, he said, say nothing till he saw how his discount was. You are too anxious as to explaining about Dixon and Co., I mean to Sir Walter; that is now at an end, and the more you say now on that point, the more awkward I must of necessity appear. Sir Walter once or twice said, Are we safe in assisting this house? I did everything I could to impress their importance upon us.

"I assure you nothing would prevent my coming out to see you, but my exhaustion. I was up almost all last night. I have Dixon and Co. and J. O. R. to write this afternoon, and notwithstanding the unremitting and excellent exertions of Mr. Auchie, I have great difficulty to keep my head cool for comers, and to trim the ship. We are at the Commercial to-day, and will get our answer to-morrow. We have had a refusal at Ramsay's to-day,

owing to our account being so high. We go to the Royal to-morrow, answer on Thursday. I am thinking of the National Bank to-morrow also, and Sir William Forbes and Co. on Thursday. I could not personally get on just now but by leaving my letters for my own house in the evening, where, after getting the post, I can sit down without interruption, and write to London. This will show you how difficult it is to get out to you just now. I think Sir Walter, on your representation, will do what you propose; and I think £5000 could be soon got on bond. He was abusing me for paying the £2100, and not foreseeing this. Seeing you in good pluck will make him do anything. He is to have Woodstock ready in January. He was most anxious to know how you felt. I shall write him two lines to say that you are not knocked down. No exertion, no influence, no thought, shall be wanting, I assure you, on my part. You are right to do all without the banks, if possible. If they keep open for bills, it will do well; *but we must have a bed of justice forthwith,* and strong and nervous measures adopted —this is no peddling matter.

"I have written to Mr. Gibson about the Rock policy. I shall say if I succeed in getting it; if so, it shall go to Dixon and Co. this night.—I am, ever yours truly,

"R. CADELL.

"After writing this, I have again read your letter with the utmost attention; there is nothing in it that is not quite right, and I most cordially concur in every word of what you propose; but I am not quite sure about the National Bank. Robert Cameron had a bill of yours at

B. L. Co. to-day. They sent him word that as it was beyond six months it would be 4½ per cent.; on this our worthy friend sent for it, and told them he would return it in eight days. This shows that all is sound there at any rate.

"I have just got the policy from Mr. Gibson—it goes to-night. R. C."

On the same day we find in Mr. Lockhart's "Life" a quotation from the diary Sir Walter had begun to keep two days before, which I shall here transcribe:—

"Here is a matter for a May morning, but much fitter for a November one. The general distress in the city has affected Hurst and Robinson, Constable's great agents. Should they *go*, it is not likely that Constable can stand, and such an event would lead to great distress and perplexity on the part of James Ballantyne and myself. Thank God, I have enough to pay more than 20s. in the pound, taking matters at the very worst. But much inconvenience must be the consequence. I had a lesson in 1814 which should have done good, but success and abundance erased it from my mind. But this is no time for journalizing, or moralizing either. Necessity is like a sour-faced cook-maid, and I a turn-spit she has flogged, ere now, till he mounted his wheel. If Woodstock can be out by 25th January it will do much, and it is possible. Could not write to purpose for thick-coming fancies.

"My spinning-wheel is auld and stiff,
The rock o't winna stand, sir;
To keep the temper pin in tiff,
Employs aft my hand, sir."

On the following day, Sir Walter wrote as follows in his private journal:—"Constable has been here, as lame as a duck upon his legs, but his heart and courage as firm as a cock. He has convinced me we will do well to sup-

port the London house. He has sent them about £5000, and proposes we should borrow, on our joint security, £5000 for their accommodation; James Ballantyne and Robert Cadell present. I must be guided by them, and hope for the best. Certainly to part company would be to incur an awful risk." This passage Mr. Lockhart has neglected to quote.

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

"*Thursday, 24th Nov.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have no word from you yet, but I expect some soon. I have, however, good news from the Royal Bank, *who gave us all we asked*—£4000, and I expect Kermack's whole £5000 to-day or to-morrow. You will see by the *Courant* the rumours of failures in London. I thank God we are now better prepared for a storm; last Friday we had not a groat of *our own*, we had £2200 borrowed. My spirits are now better, and with the additions we shall to-morrow or next day send to J. O. R., I hope the best. My tactic is this—to send Robinson all we can, and to get our accounts here filled; our support will keep J. O. R. up in money and spirits, and should the London reports get ding-dong here, which I think is likely, as they are in print, we have not our discounts to ask, but they are in our hands, and cash to stem the storm. No manœuvre, no generalship shall be wanting, but I think we will be fortunate not to be talked of *yet* as connected with H., R., and Co.; it has not taken place, but I care little for that, it may come. 'Trim, trim the ship, and sit quiet,' as the song says, is my motto; but

I am still somehow of opinion that Mr. Hurst's letter bodes more demands than £5000, or £10,000 either,—but it will probably be well on in December when the addition is necessary. Just as I am writing this, Sir Walter has come in. I regret I had not got Mr. Hurst's letter; if it comes, I shall call and show it to him. I have done all I could to ease his mind, but the shock has still to be stood here, therefore I do not allow myself any lack of vigilance. Much more of this will hurt one."

On the 24th my father writes to Mr. Cadell:—"I have great hopes that matters will soon get right in the south. Your letters of last night would help." Sir Walter, in his journal of the 25th, has entered:—"I found a letter from Cadell, giving a cheering account of things in London. Their correspondent is getting into his strength. Three days ago I would have been contented to buy this *consola*, as Judy says, dearer than by a dozen falls in the mud." In his quotation from the private journal, Mr. Lockhart has omitted the conclusion of this sentence; it runs thus,—

"For had the great Constable fallen,

'O what a fall were there, my countrymen!'"

Another, and an important passage in Sir Walter's diary, which Mr. Lockhart has omitted to quote, occurs in the entry for December 18th, and is as follows:—

"I have about £10,000 of Constable's, for which I am bound to give literary value. But if I am obliged to pay other debts for him, I will take leave to retain this sum at his credit. We shall have made some *kittle* questions of literary property amongst us. Once more, patience, cousin, and shuffle the cards."[1]

From this last passage it would appear that the prospects

[1] See *infra*, p. 441.

in the south were becoming more gloomy, and the following sentences in letters from my father and his partner confirm that view :—

"EDINBURGH, *Monday morning, 28th Nov.* 1825.

" . . . I do not enclose J. O. R.'s letter to-day, as he has written to yourself. He is quite charmed with my plan of announcing Woodstock; he says it is better than money, and will do them more good. It was an admirable thought.

"I am not at all comfortable about money matters generally. All the bankers here are dull, and preparing for a storm; they are refusing right and left any more advances on houses, and some smashing in that line is expected. I know at the Bank of Scotland opinions are not favourable to a comfortable winter. The same at the B. L. Co.

"I am therefore doubly anxious to see the Miscellany in going progress; the same with Woodstock. . . ."

My father writes on 11th December :—"I have yours of last night, along with the Globe. Matters do indeed look very far from well in the south, but I hope they will not continue so long. I shall be with you early to-morrow. My anxieties, I assure you, are quite equal to your own. . . . The bargain as to the Miscellany is tender ground at present, but I hope it will do."

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

" *Tuesday evening, 13th December.*

"I missed you to-day by a few seconds. You were driving round the corner of the Bridge when I emerged

from Ballantyne's. I have there done what I considered a duty. I found Jas. B.'s matters covered to Saturday only, and at once got him to agree to represent along with me the *instant necessity* of Sir W. borrowing £10,000 on Abbotsford. I wrote a letter on the spot, which James B. enclosed. Geo. Hogarth came in at this moment, and said that he could get him the money in twenty-four hours. The letter was despatched forthwith. I do not know how he may receive it, but I know this, if we do not all of us exert, our occupation will soon end. I am not too gloomy; a gloomy man exerts, a sanguine one thinks things will mend and sits with his hands across; that will not do just now. I have at all events done my duty to Sir W.; he cannot blame me after this; and in case any circumstance should arise whereby you may see him to-morrow before me, it is as well that you know what I have done.

"And now let me entreat of you to exert yourself; it is just now for all; I see it as clear as the sun; and if you have any means that you can make available, now is the time. I have done and am doing all that is practicable. I have from private friends £2500. The nerve that is now necessary is just once for all; if not done, honour, character, etc., are away. If Sir W. does not see this, I cannot help it. I have sounded the alarm; if those interested more than I am will not echo, I shall have the consolation of thinking that in all points I have done my duty, and died game. Things are to me so gloomy that my countenance has obliged me to tell Mrs. C. of the dangers that threaten us."

"*Saturday morning.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—Neither of the within are good. When our friend cannot raise £387, the amount of Mr. William's bill, it is not the thing. Jas. B. has just been with me. I showed him Robinson's letter.

"I do say to you most frankly, that I do not think your being in town to-morrow will do any good. I do not see much good to come from London. . . .

"*Sunday evening.*

"It is very fortunate that this, from an accident, was not sent last night, those to-night are so very different; and really Robinson, to say but little, uses us very ill. I shall tell you in the morning what were the proceedings of the day. In consequence of Robinson's abominable letter of last night, coupled with Hood's, I have been in such a state I cannot tell you."

On December 24 Sir Walter's private diary has the following passage:—

"Constable has a new scheme of publishing the works of the Author of Waverley in a superior style, at £1, 1s. volume. He says he will answer for making £20,000 of this, and liberally offered me any share of the profits. I have no great claim to any, as I have only to contribute the notes, which are light work; yet a few thousands coming in will be a good thing—besides the Printing Office. Constable, though valetudinary, and cross with his partner, is certainly as good a pilot in these rough seas as ever man put faith in."

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

"*24th Dec.*

"I am obliged to go to General Johnston's funeral at 12. But as all is now right with good Mr. Carstairs, we will have to make a push with the B. L. Co. to secure ourselves.

Up to 7 Jany. we must have		£14,000
I see no chance of getting this from ordinary acting, but I have laid aside about £6400 of bills, which I am sure, on a representation, Mr. Gilchrist will give to us . .	£6,400	
From Bank of S., . . .	2,000	
Nat. Bank, ...	1,000	
Cash and sundries, ...	5,000	
	———	£14,400

"You could easily introduce yourself with a copy of the Miscellany, and bring on the matter with Mr. Gilchrist. This is absolutely necessary also on account of Key and Co., to whom we must soon, by some other extra exertion, remit something before you get to London.

"I find we have only £7600, Hurst and Co. at B. L. Co.

"I pledge myself not to trouble you with cash when you are in London, if you can lift me over these two weeks."

For a few days after this there seems to have been a sort of lull before the final tempest, and I possess no documentary correspondence between the 24th December and the 4th January 1826, when my father wrote in much anxiety to Mr. Cadell. From allusions in Lockhart's Life of Scott, it would appear that my father was blamed for not being in London a fortnight earlier than the state of his health made it possible for him to travel, and it is even suggested that his earlier presence there might have averted the catastrophe.[1] However flattering to his financial influence

[1] On the 13th January, Mr. Cadell wrote as follows:—"Matters are now on such a pivot, that one day may do or undo all. For God's sake think of this; think of the many that must fall with us, and the ruin that must be spread far and wide. There is one other thing,—

and sagacity, blame was scarcely generous, and the result anticipated surely utopian.

On the 10th January Mr. Cadell wrote as follows :—

"We must have £50,000, less will do no good whatever; indeed, £40,000 would be required soon, but without the first we could not manage to get over our present difficulties, and even then with a great strain.

"The first fund to be looked to to attain this is the works contracted for with the Author of Waverley.

For work contracted for on March 6, 1823, we have advanced		£2,500
Do. do on Oct. 20, 1823, . . .		2,500
Do. do on Napoleon, ...		2,600
Sum advanced, .		£7,600
Woodstock, which will be out in February, will yield	£8,000	
Napoleon, which will be out in October, . .	10,000	
Another novel in December will yield . . .	8,000	
	£26,000	

"But over and above the new works mentioned above, A. C. and Co. propose to contract for an edition of the works of the Author of Waverley, which will consist of 30 volumes octavo, with notes by the author. This edition to be splendidly printed, with illustrations, to sell for 15s. or 16s. per vol. The impression 2000 copies.

"For the publication of this edition, and the new works enumerated on the other side, A. C. and Co. require a credit of £50,000—this sum to be applied, in the first instance, to the reduction of all bills drawn by them on Hurst, Robinson, and Co. without value, and to the

any delay, even a few hours, may stop you in a snow-storm, and upset all! Oh that you had been in London now, as at first intended; had it been so, this could not have happened."

withdrawing of all the contra bills of James Ballantyne and Co., so as to reduce the transactions with H., R., and Co. to value transactions entirely. This will insure the safety of both concerns, and enable A. C. and Co. to do the same with Jas. B. and Co.

"In order to secure Messrs. H., R., and Co., A. C. and Co. would convey them by bargain the publication of Woodstock, and the other two works, also of the edition of the author's works above stated, along with the insurances of £15,000 on the author's life.

Messrs. H., R., and Co. to grant to A. C. and Co. five bills of at 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 years, ...		£10,000 £50,000
To the credit of this sum will go—		
The amount of the invoice of Woodstock, .	£8,000	
Ditto of Napoleon, .	10,000	
Ditto of another Novel,	8,000	
So that Messrs. Hurst and Co. will have in 12 months	£26,000	

to the credit of the sum granted. And so soon as ten vols. of the great edition are ready, it may also go to the credit of the sum so granted.

"It must be obvious that it is H., R., and Co.'s interest to try to meet the views of A. C. and Co.—their mutual connexion is important to each other. Messrs. H., R., and Co. are now borrowing capital largely. This must be repaid, or at any rate the interest, so that A. C. and Co.'s connexion is absolutely necessary for H., R., and Co. By the total removal of the bills without value, as the contra bills of Jas. Ballantyne and Co., the transactions of the parties will be cut down to their real business, and thus comfort be insured to all of them. At present A. C. and Co. cannot reduce these bills without some such aid, which

they can convert into cash by some private negotiation; any public negotiation is wholly out of the question.

"It might be prudent to send a sketch of something like the foregoing to Mr. Robinson, that he may have time to consider it and lay it before the Messrs. Hurst.

To wipe away Jas. B. and Co.'s contra bills, . .	£25,000
Do., our bills on H., R., and Co., ...	10,000
Do., what we owe Key and Co., ...	6,000
Advances to the Author of Waverley, . . .	5,000
	£46,000"

CHAPTER XX.

Mr. Constable starts for London—Letters from Mr. Cadell to his partner and to Mr. Robinson—Letters from London to Mr. Cadell—From Mr. Cadell to Mr. Constable—Last letters from London, to Mr. Cadell and Sir Walter Scott—Sir Walter's manly answer—Letter from Mr. Constable to Mr. Lockhart.

ON the 13th of January 1826 my father left Edinburgh, and reached London on the third day, when he found the following letters from his partner awaiting him :—

"134 GEORGE STREET,
Friday evening, 13th January.

"MY DEAR SIR,—Enclosed you have copy of our letter to Mr. Carstairs of this date, as well as his two letters to us. You will notice that we have not only remitted to Mr. Carstairs £2600 of fresh long bills, but bankers' drafts for £1500; but observe, I have not alluded to a fear of dishonour at Dixon and Co.'s; it would not do when talking calmly on other matters to appear to know of so great a calamity as Dixon and Co.'s conduct. *By Ballantyne's most praiseworthy aid (which long as I may live I shall never forget) I have been enabled to do this.* In allusion to your conversations with Carstairs, the best documents you can get to show him are the original invoices at 5 Waterloo Place; but you should know that there is one if not two bills which will not stand this; but all the £350 ones, and £550, will do, as well as the Crusader bill sent this day.

"Now, as to Dixon and Co.:—having no letter from them, it is impossible to know what to say to them, but were I to see them I would be inclined to talk in rather a high tone. If they are to go on as they have chosen to do just now, I would say, 'Very well, gentlemen; we provide for no more drafts; you have taken your course; it is a total deviation from the mode in which it has been conducted hitherto, and we shall content ourselves with providing for our own acceptances.' Such an account is really not worth having, and Mr. Dixon deserves to smart for it—always taking into consideration whether or not such a course might not injure ourselves.

"God be praised, the Bank of Scotland did all we asked to-day, £2100, which has almost kept me from sinking; a draft on Hood, £1000; your son's bill, £350; Hurst, Robinson, and Co., £471; and sundry small bills—so that we are enabled to meet Applegarth's bill, if it comes back to-morrow, and with farther aid from Ballantyne shall be enabled to keep up our account at the British Linen Co., for fear of Mr. Carstairs returning bill per £1500. £750 sight. Royal Bank on Bank of England is our provision for our bill to Sir Walter Scott, at Dixon and Co.; pray ask if it is taken care of. If Dixon and Co., on your getting to town, accept the £1000 and £1282 for Robinson, and £1371 for Carstairs, you might get up the £1371 from Carstairs, as the £1500 sent to-day provides for it, and give Robinson and Co. the £1371, which, with Carstairs's £3000, £2292, and £1371, will make £6663 for Hurst, Robinson, and Co. I shall be most anxious to hear from you.

"A letter from Robinson, but nothing more than his having paid our bill to Applegarth. Applegarth's bill, discounted at Ramsay and Co.'s, may still be with us in the morning. I shall write to you to-morrow.—I am very truly yours, R. CADELL.

"I have written to Hood that you are in town, and will see him. I have said to him that you have gone up to launch a great publication."

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

"EDINBURGH, 14*th January* 1826.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have no good news to give you to-night: Robinson has allowed Applegarth's bill to come back, so that we are gone at Ramsay's; and I suppose he will, in like manner, allow Gale to come back at Sir Wm. Forbes and Co.'s, which will do the like there; and we shall have, I fear, Mr. Carstairs's back at the British Linen Co., per £1500, so that in three successive days we will have £4000 to get. After what we did for Robinson in November, this, to say but little, is but so-so usage, especially as it is clear that he has the money. It is absolutely necessary that we get *instant*, *instant* aid; this will not last; delays will not do. Had you been in London on or about the 2d or 5th January, all this would have been averted; but it is needless to state one's distress, it is bad enough in reality.

"I have written Robinson a long letter upon the subject of raising money. I thought it as well just to put the matter before him in that broad way.

"There is no other news. I enclose a letter from Birmingham about the Miscellany; all the country advertisements are off, and Taylor gets on smartly. More orders from Aberdeen—half in volumes.

Robinson by allowing Applegarth's bill to come back is better	£2000	0	0
And if he allows Gale's, ...	500	0	0
Bill on Mr. Carstairs, ...	3000	0	0
	£5500	0	0
Less paid on bill, . .	2000	0	0
Better, ...	£3500	0	0
Our bill due 11/14 inst., ...	1000	0	0
This sum will pay for	£2500	0	0

our draft on him at Dixon and Co.'s, 27/30. By the way, Robinson has Wentworth and Co.'s bill per £2000, due 29th January. Mr. Carstairs has £1371, 4s. on Brooks and Co., over which, as the £1500 sent yesterday is a double remittance, you could get one of them for two bills to Sir Walter, due the end of the month.—I am, my dear Sir, yours truly, R. CADELL."

On the same date Mr. Cadell had addressed a long letter to Mr. Robinson, which I also print entire :—

"EDINBURGH, 14*th January* 1826.

"MY DEAR SIR,—You and I are partners, I may say, if ever two persons were *all but* partners. I shall therefore make no apology for giving you a full, true, and particular account of my feelings on the present crisis in all our affairs.

"It is as clear as the shining sun that all of us—I

mean you, Ballantyne, and we—are wading,—that we have all too much existence by wind-capital,—that such a capital constantly floating is at all times to be deprecated, but in times like the present *must be removed; if it is not*, we will all of us be *removed into the Bankrupt List*, and that as sure as I am now writing. I think Mr. Constable takes a wrong view when he says that Ballantyne's bills have done this. The real state of the case is,—Ballantyne's bills have averted it till this time; but for them we could not have gone on so long. But I make no allusion to this but for the purpose of illustration. I make no kind of reflection; although some of the bills sent by you have brought us into discredit with our London moneyed connexions, still I always keep in mind that your support and ours were one: we could not row in two boats. It is the remedy I now come to speak to; and you will not think it unnatural, I dare say, that I allude to the concern I know most about, and of the remedies that ought to be applied, with an explanation of what these remedies are.

"I may then state that, with the exception of Ballantyne's bills, in so far as used by us, and what we have from you without value, our borrowed capital does not exceed £20,000. It is more, certainly, if Dixon and Co. and Carstairs' accounts are taken in; but they are founded on real funds; but we may be forced to cut them down, and may not be able to convert the long bills in their hands to meet the cutting down. It is of no use mentioning a small sum, and in six months afterwards to say that one was afraid to name the real sum. I have no such

fears in speaking to you, and I do therefore say most unhesitatingly that this concern requires the sum of £50,000 to make it sound, comfortable, and safe to its connexions and friends, and as it has property, that property must be so managed as to bring in funds to wipe off the embarrassments; and, although our wings may be pared, still we may perhaps be able to say: 'We have lost all but our honour.' For myself, I care not one straw; it is for those with whom I am connected in business that I dread such an end as bankruptcy, and who might and would reflect strongly on the confiding trust they put in those who have not deserved it.

"But now to the remedies:—

1*st*, We have no Mr. Green of Enfield,
2*d*, We have no Mr. Thos. Hurst,
3*d*, We have no property to mortgage,

but we have much valuable literary property, which, with going works, should yield good securities for a large sum. I do not mean the literary property itself to go, or rather to be sold, but what it may produce under judicious arrangements:—

1*st*, then, of a new series: Woodstock is going on fast, and will yield to you, per invoice, say . . .	£7,500	0	0
2*d*, The Miscellaneous Works of Sir Walter Scott, in 6 vols. 8vo, 1000 copies, say . .	2,500	0	0
3*d*, Memoirs of Napoleon, getting on fast, in 5 thick vols., say	10,000	0	0
4*th*, There will be another Novel this year, which will bring, say	7,500	0	0
5*th*, Scott Poetry, last edition, say . .	2,000	0	0
	£29,500	0	0

Brought forward,	£29,500	0	0
Mr. Constable has some plan which he will submit to you, which should yield soon . .	20,000	0	0
A new series of Novels up to Woodstock, *inclusive*, say	7,500	0	0
Making a sum of	£57,000	0	0

Now then, my worthy friend, here is nearly £60,000 of property, which could be increased in security,

1*st*, By the sum of £15,000 insured on the life of Sir W. Scott; and
2*d*, By the deposit, as a farther guarantee, of the conveyances to the literary property of Waverley to Quentin Durward inclusive, and the Works of Sir W. Scott.

"By such means, if an operation could be performed so as to give ease and relief in this quarter, the ease in Ballantyne's quarter will follow, as he rests upon us, and the ease to you will be that we do not rest on you but for value. If some such plan could be carried through, it would put us all right to you and your Co. We can do nothing but to submit our views in full, and concert fully on all points of it; this Mr. Constable will do at much greater length, and more in detail, but I think it is as well to state it thus broadly to you. Mr. Constable's views on such points are second to none, and he has some channels in which the mention of these plans may do good, but I think then you say, 'What is Cadell's opinion of all this?' I now tell my view of the matter. I know you will think no worse of me for stating the whole openly. Hurst, Robinson, and Co. and us are in reality one. We must try and concert some measure which will conduce to our mutual support, and allow the stream to flow on as it has done for our mutual benefit. I think it may be as

well that you show this to Mr. Constable.—I am ever yours faithfully, ROB. CADELL.

"I am quite convinced, that if we could have brought out the Author of Waverley's works just now in shilling numbers, we could in two years have realized such a sum as would pay every engagement on our books, no matter of what kind. The Miscellany bids very fair. We are getting orders from all quarters. You will soon get plenty. Our advertisements for the English papers are off.

"*Saturday evening.*

"Yours of the 12th instant is this moment to hand. Well, and you have let Applegarth's bill come back? No matter; it is useless to repine. The letters of yesterday will show you that we have done everything that man could do to replace the £3000 and £2292 to you; the sum of Applegarth, £2000, we may get over, and Gale's also, but keep in mind that this closes our ability to get on with discounts here; but I shall fight on, and if we do fall, we shall fall with harness on our backs.—Yours ever truly, ROB. CADELL.

"So soon as the Miscellany is out I shall let fly on you in all quarters at short dates."

My father's hopes were great, during the two first days of his stay in London, that matters might yet be set to rights, and as will be seen from his correspondence, presently to be quoted, it was not until within an hour of his leaving it on his sad homeward journey that the hope of immediate relief was finally extinguished. His knowledge of the real value of the literary property belonging

to his house still afforded him the comforting assurance that he and his partner would be enabled, with time and careful management, to meet all their liabilities; and had Sir Walter Scott entered into his views, the banks and other parties interested might have been induced to grant the aid required, when the creditors of Archibald Constable and Company, as well as those of Sir Walter, might eventually have received payment of their claims in full. The immense fortune realized within a few years thereafter by the works of the Author of Waverley alone, not to mention the Encyclopædia and other valuable copyrights of the house, attest the possibility of such a bright result; but different views were entertained by other parties interested, and it was not to be.

On the 17th January my father wrote twice to Mr. Cadell; on the 18th he wrote again, and, on the 19th, after receiving his partner's letter of the 16th, he despatched his final communication before leaving London for Edinburgh :—

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. CADELL.

"OSBORNE'S HOTEL, ADELPHI,
Tuesday, Jan. 17, 1826.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I was so shocked on getting to Waterloo Place yesterday morning, that it had nearly unfitted me for business. I found Mr. Thomas Hurst and Mr. Robinson preparing to go into the City, and I accompanied them. My first call was on Dixon and Co. I found Mr. D. in his usual quiet condition. He said the drafts in the hands of Glyn were declined, because, had he accepted them, our account would again have been increased in-

stead of diminished,—that credit had hourly been becoming more and more ticklish,—that almost no banking house in London had escaped without severe trial,—that their own house had had a severe run, and been reported as having stopt payment,—that distress had ceased with the bankers,—that it had now got into the mercantile classes, and he could not say where it would stop,—that he would rather pay all his acceptances and wait the issue on the securities he had.

"Robinson, who was with me, asked whether he would not advance £5000 or £10,000 on satisfactory bills to assist for a little. He said he was afraid that, looking to themselves, he could not go so far,—that I might depend on his friendly disposition,—would consult Mr. Langdale, and so forth. On this Robinson left us, when Dixon said to me that the dealings of Hurst, Robinson, and Co. had become greatly too extensive, and he had been anxious for some time to have seen our connexion with them lessened, and accounts opened with other booksellers. I told him that one of my great objects in returning so soon to London was for the very purpose of doing this; in particular, with one great work just about to appear. Upon the whole, I am of opinion that these drafts appearing together with Hurst's indorsation coming from Glyn's, was the cause of the refusal of acceptance. This, I think, is nearly all that passed. I need not add that they will not have paid our acceptance to Sir Walter Scott, for which you remitted.

"I went to Mr. Carstairs, and met a kind and friendly reception. He showed me your letter and the enclosures, with which he was well pleased. The £3000 draft was

still with him, accepted. I saw also *that* for £1500, sent through the B. Linen Co., and he seemed undecided whether to accept or not; he was to determine to-day, which, I think, will be for its dishonour. Had Hurst, Robinson, and Co. not stopped on Saturday, he would have accepted both. Mr. Thomas Hurst assured me that Hunter on Hunter was unquestionably good. Mr. Carstairs continues of a different opinion. Nothing could be more friendly than all that passed between us, and he said he was quite ready to assist us to a much larger amount on securities like those he had been accustomed to receive from us, provided his doing so would aid us in preventing any interruption in our own concerns. I told him all I knew and thought as to the affairs of Hurst, Robinson, and Co. He offered to inquire at Glyn's respecting them; he did so, and I saw him afterwards. The result was very satisfactory. Robinson had explained all his affairs to Mr. Mills, who seemed to be fully aware of our situation in regard to Sir Walter Scott and Ballantyne. Mr. Mills said the only thing he thought they could now do was to ask him what he thought they would get, particularly from the banks in Scotland.

" Mr. Green of Enfield had advanced from time to time £30,000, and was just on the eve of making a similar advance. Had he done so, Glyn and Co. were to have given £25,000, which together would have kept all right; but Mr. Green decided in the negative on Friday evening, and it was by the advice of Glyn and Co. that Robinson suspended payments on Saturday. It is a sad misfortune that either you or myself had not been here a fortnight

ago, as both mishaps, Chancery Lane and Abchurch, might have been prevented. Green of Enfield is in rather an awkward predicament; he has been receiving usurious interest, and Mr. Robinson has declared to me and to his partners that Mr. Green shall not receive a shilling so long as there is one due to any other creditor.

"Glyn and Co. had given Mr. Carstairs the most favourable impressions as to Robinson. Mr. Carstairs observed oftener than once, that he thought the gentleman at Enfield had better have given the second aid, and should do so still. Green has no security for the money he has advanced, but he was to have got security for £60,000 had he advanced the difference. He offered £10,000 if they would give him security for £40,000, but this they declined. While writing this, Mr. Thomas Hurst and Mr. Robinson have called on me, on their way to the Bank of England. I doubt it is too late to apply for any aid in that quarter, but I shall perhaps be able to report to you before post-time the result of the application.

"Now, with regard to my own opinion as to these most dreadful affairs: I am very much convinced, indeed I have hardly a doubt, that H., R., and Co. will, within a fair allowance of time, pay all they owe, if they manage their own affairs. Their stock of books is of a cast very different from that of a miscellaneous collection, totally different from that of any other London bookseller, a considerable bulk consisting of the most celebrated books of the day; and there cannot be a doubt that Mr. Thomas Hurst's exertions, skill, and popularity make him a most powerful auxiliary to Robinson, and ought to have a

powerful influence in obtaining for them all the accommodation in point of time which the circumstances of the case will admit. Mr. Glyn mentioned to Mr. Carstairs that the Scotch banks who held Robinson's bills would be liberal on the occasion.

"With regard to the plans of finance devised before I left home, and alluded to in your letter to Robinson, of the 14th, and which I have just seen, it will be needless for me to make any attempt at them, from what has just occurred. I had a long conversation yesterday with Duncan the accountant, who assured me the mercantile distress in London which he was witnessing hourly baffled all belief. With regard to booksellers, he observed, after the powerful struggle, additional means, and great success of Hurst, Robinson, and Co.'s concern, he did not know who was safe, nor did he know any person in the trade who was so,—willing in the present time to make a purchase to the extent of £100. It will require many months before anything need to be attempted in the way of sale out of the most ordinary routine of business.

"*Half-past five o'clock.*

"The above was written in the early part of the day. I shall make what has occurred since the subject of another and more public letter, adding here that the securities which I have agreed to give consist of the copyrights of the Encyclopædia Britannica Supt., Novels, etc., of the Author of Waverley, and a personal engagement from Sir Walter Scott for £20,000. If all these matters go straight, affairs will be put, I trust, on a solid and comfortable footing. Mr. Hurst and Mr. Robinson are

this instant again in the City, and I hope to be able to tell you of the success. I intended to have written you more at length, but have been so constantly interrupted that I have not been able to do so. I have had a very kind call from Mr. Carstairs. He has declined to accept the £1500, but I hope, in another post, if all goes as I expect, to be able to tell you to send it back again.—I am, my dear Sir, yours truly, ARCHD. CONSTABLE."

"LONDON, *Jan.* 17, 1826.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have received your letter of Saturday, and have also seen that to Robinson. I have been engaged one way or other the whole of this day in matters connected with the affairs of Hurst, Robinson, and Co., and am so fatigued in consequence as to be obliged to use the hand of another in writing. I mentioned in my hurried letter of last night a prospect of moneyed support to a large amount upon securities of various kinds, partly from Glyn and partly from the Bank of England,—the amount to be very considerable, and sufficient to carry Hurst, Robinson, and Co.'s business triumphantly forward. I am to be a party, under a particular arrangement, by which we shall receive for our own purposes as much as I think you would say will be sufficient, and a sum also for Ballantyne and Co., to render their concerns also independent till times get better—for they cannot be worse. The mode and periods of repayment to be fixed. I have delayed writing this letter in the hope of ascertaining the fact. Mr. Hurst and Mr. Robinson are now in the City, and I hope, before closing, to give you good tidings. The particulars you shall have to-morrow.

"I have been with Dixon and Co., and had a very kind and long conversation with them. It was quite true that there was a great run upon them. Mr. Dixon made the best excuse he could for having refused the drafts, and said a great deal on the subject of our securities being almost entirely on one concern; against which I could plainly perceive there had been some people at work to give him an unfavourable impression about hops and other speculations. I have no doubt if Hurst, Robinson, and Co. are supported and go on, that we may retain our credit here, if we wish it.

"I have seen Mr. Carstairs three times. He had made himself fully acquainted with the circumstances of H., R., and Co. Mr. Mills, of Glyn and Co., had given him the best account possible as to the general integrity of the house, activity of Robinson, and value of Thomas Hurst. His expressions of kindness towards us would have gratified you to hear; but he was quite aware how much our future comfort depended on Hurst and Co.'s concern being kept up, and assured me, should that be effected, we would find his services at our command as heretofore. He was much pleased with the promptness of the additional cover and remittance. He is to use influence with the bank-directors, if it be necessary.

"Now with regard to the funds of Hurst, Robinson, and Co. Fortunately a great part of their stock is of the most marketable description. The present moment is of course most unfavourable for sales; but still, if they are put right in money matters, I have no doubt of their soon effecting sales, and cutting down their concerns to a

most comfortable and manageable position. I shall be very anxious to know what you did in consequence of the dishonour of Robinson's bills—a circumstance so appalling and unexpected. The support which I trust in God they are to receive now, could have been had before, if expertly gone about. Mr. Green of Enfield was relied upon for £30,000, but it misgave, and threw all into confusion, and put poor Robinson half distracted. There are some circumstances connected with this gentleman, Mr. Green, which I shall tell you of afterwards.

"You will naturally say, What of ourselves? Be assured I am not without my due anxieties on that score. Some of the plans which we contemplated before I left Edinburgh, had Hurst, Robinson, and Co. stood firm, would, I think, have been carried; and if H., R., and Co. are put on their legs, I hope in my next to show you how we shall stand firm. Duncan the accountant, with whom I had a long conversation yesterday, tells me that the mercantile distress baffles all belief. There is a great deal of trade going on; no want of money, but an utter destruction of confidence. I am sure you will be happy to know that Key and Co. have hitherto stood out the storm. They must have lost a large sum of money, but their resources are unquestionably great. I called at their counting-house in passing, but did not find either of the partners. Mr. Carstairs was speaking kindly of them to-day; they have been acting with great liberality to all their unfortunate debtors.

"I need not say anything of my anxiety to hear from you. I have no doubt of the perfect propriety of any

measures you may have thought it necessary to adopt. I trust in God my next letter will convey to you intelligence of the negotiation now pending for Hurst and Co. It must be an *effectual* measure, for after the blow which their credit, and that of others, has sustained, half-measures would do no good. I repeat again my confidence in the ultimate result of their affairs, if left to their own management. Thomas Hurst has already paid into their concern £38,000 in hard cash, and has a great deal of other property which would have been forthcoming, and must be so immediately, under any circumstances. His property at Highgate has cost him £15,000, and he is a holder in various stock companies.

"*Half-past six.*

"Mr. Hurst and Mr. Robinson are not returned from the City. I hope they have succeeded, and will also have written to you from the City.

"You shall hear from me more at length to-morrow.—Yours most truly, ARCH. CONSTABLE."

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. CADELL.

"LONDON, 18*th January* 1826.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have yours of Sunday evening, and shall be anxious indeed to hear from you to-morrow.

"It is now six o'clock, and I have not time to enter into the business of the support alluded to yesterday; but I shall devote to-morrow morning to a long letter on the subject, and in the meantime it gives me infinite delight to say that cash to a very large amount is *all but certain.* The final answer is to be obtained to-morrow. If this

takes place, Hurst, Robinson, and Company will be firmer than ever. They will take up every acceptance they are under, and a sum will be secured for Scotland, to the amount of four-tenths of the round amount named in your letter to Robinson, and all the transactions for Napoleon, Woodstock, etc., left to be added to it. One fixed point is, that all the money due to Scotland shall be paid as it becomes due, and a great proportion of the first payments are to ourselves.

"I have dictated two letters to my son,—to Mr. Gibson and Sir Walter Scott, which I enclose. I cannot enter into particulars, as unless the thing takes place it would be needless, even to you. I propose that Thomas Hurst accompany me to Edinburgh. A week or two of him there would do us all much good.

"With regard to my stay here, it must at present be short under any circumstance, so that you need not trouble yourself by writing long letters to me—till you hear from me to-morrow, which God grant may be to as much good purpose as I expect it to be. In the meantime, with a heart somewhat lighter than it was some hours ago, but still in deep distress, I am, my dear Sir, yours sincerely,

"ARCHD. CONSTABLE."

"LONDON, *Jany.* 18, 1825.

"*Most Private in the meantime.*—The sum Hurst, Robinson, and Co. get from Glyn and Co.—not the bank—is expected to be . . . £75,000

Green of Enfield, in consequence, . 25,000

£100,000

on securities of various kinds. We are to get for ourselves and Sir Walter Scott, and Ballantyne and Co., £40,000 or £45,000. We join in securities; give conveyance to copyright of Ency. Brit. and Novels and Tales; also deposit insurance on Sir Walter's life, £15,000. Glyn is no party to the disposal of the money. Sir Walter Scott must also join, say, as an additional cover, to the amount of £20,000. This would surely put all right in the meantime, and there is to be time fixed for repayment of obligations. This would insure us full payment of all Hurst, Robinson, and Co.'s large debt, and with Thomas Hurst no fear for the future, I should hope. Green of Enfield is not yet completely managed, but he is in a scrape. He has been taking usurious interest. Excuse this indistinct scrawl. I have made Mr. Lockhart privy to all. The late hour compels me to be thus brief, and I write under harassed feelings."

MR. CADELL to MR. CONSTABLE.

"*Sunday evening, January 15th.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—I fear things are now coming to such a pass that A. C. and Co. will, before many days, cease to exist. Robinson, as you will soon know, has returned one of his own bills; what bill that is I know not; but writing from this house I fear it is a bill for £1000 done at the Bank of Scotland, which, you know, settles the business. Applegarth's bill is at Ramsay's to-morrow, Gale's will be at Sir Wm. Forbes and Co.'s on Tuesday, and Carstairs' at the British Linen Co. on Tuesday also—in all, £5000. Now do I regret your going from home; and

I should most certainly have wished to have had you here at this awful catastrophe, which I now see it is impossible to avert, and I do think it would be arrant folly to attempt to avert. We are dished at Ramsay's, Bank of Scotland, British Linen Co., and Sir Wm. Forbes and Co. I leave you therefore to judge what my feelings are, and with little to pay ourselves, how with borrowed funds we can attempt to stem the torrent, and fall after struggling a few days longer. Robinson's letter of last night was all hope; that of this night is all despair; and when we find Hurst and Co. gone at Glyn and Co.'s and back at the Bank of Scotland—why, what can be done? The thing will not do. With Robinson all right and his bills all paid, I saw daylight, the more as his letter of last night said that a sum he looked for on Saturday would provide for January, and, of course, thinking him all safe, and Archibald Constable and Co. the only remedy to bring about, I did not despair; but now the tables are turned. Robinson's bills are back, which to us is death, and I can see it in no other light. Alas! alas! such is the end of all our hopes and expectations. I have struggled hard. I have fought as for my life. Last Thursday I did not expect this, but now I see no escape. I shall, I think, wait till to-morrow night to see one other letter from Robinson; but longer than that it is, I think, impossible. You will, of course, judge for yourself whether you will remain long in London. Had you gone to London on 2d Jany. all this might have been different; but all is now, I fear, too late, and oh, there will be a sad din!—I am, my dear Sir, yours truly, R. CADELL.

"We have a letter from Dixon and Co. declining to accept any more bills."

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. CADELL.

"OSBORNE'S HOTEL, 19*th January* 1826.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am just preparing to leave this for home, where I hope to be on Sunday. I received your letter of the 16th this morning. Words are little under present circumstances, and I shall not therefore trouble you with many of them now.

"The reports of the trade to-day are *very bad;* in short, the whole seem on the brink of ruin. I have not yet received any certain intelligence of Hurst, Robinson, and Co.'s success in the City. I am waiting with much anxiety a call from them, now nearly half-past four, and I intend setting out on my journey at six. I have been nursing myself for the fatigue, which, I assure you, in coming up was not little. I should have preferred the mail, but the uncertain state of my health would have rendered that a precarious mode of travelling for me. Had anything effectual been done I should have heard. I fear they have failed in their project. I have experienced a mark of considerate kindness to-day, which I shall never forget, but will tell you of at meeting.

"I saw Mr. Henry Key yesterday; he is a truly respectable, worthy man. They have lost £50,000, it is said, by the failures already announced. He told me Whittaker's concern would, under the most indifferent management, pay in full and leave a reversion. The Sheriff's speculation in hops was only £40,000. I fear

our friend Robinson has not realized much by his step in that way. I shall be most anxious to meet you as early on Monday as I can. If you are to be in Princes Street, or elsewhere, be so good as let me know.

"Hurst, Robinson, and Co. have not succeeded to the extent *necessary*, and therefore the plan is at an end; they could have got to one-half the amount, which would not be at all what would have done the deed. I have still the greatest confidence that there will be no loss ultimately, which is a great comfort.—I am, my dear Sir, ever sincerely yours, ARCHD. CONSTABLE."

Sir Walter in his private diary of January 19 records:—"Letters from Constable and Robinson have arrived. The last persist in saying they will pay all and everybody. They say, moreover, in a postscript, that had Constable been in town ten days sooner, all would have been well. I feel quite composed and determined to labour. There is no remedy. I *guess* (as Matthews makes his Yankees say) that we shall not be troubled with visitors, and I *calculate* that I will not go out at all; so what can I do better than labour? Even yesterday I went about making notes on Waverley, according to Constable's plan. It will do good one day."

The letter from my father, above alluded to, was written the day before he left London, while still not without hope:—

"OSBORNE'S HOTEL, ADELPHI, *Jan.* 18*th*, 1826.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I wrote you a few hurried lines before leaving Edinburgh, and the unfortunate state of

things which met me on my arrival here will doubtless by this time have reached you,—the suspension of the payments of Hurst, Robinson, and Co. After what had happened during the last six weeks, the support given them from Edinburgh, and the additional capital and assistance of Mr. Thomas Hurst, had, as I conceived, confirmed the stability of their concern. Unfortunately, the present most unprecedented times, the general demolition of credit, and the utter absence of all mercantile confidence, has brought them to a pause, and, in consequence, much distress and inconvenience must fall on other quarters, which I shall not attempt to enumerate. What is now to be done is to make the best we can of this unlooked-for calamity, and if all those most intimately connected in these affairs act with manly firmness, entire confidence and kindness to each other, I shall have little dread of the result, that every one will get his own, and that, after the present severe trial and lesson, we shall all be able to go on as prosperously as ever.

"With regard to the state of H., R., and Co.'s affairs, there have been some improper paragraphs in the newspapers. What I learn from themselves is this—their total engagements amount to nearly £200,000; their property of every description is estimated at a low rate to fully £350,000. They have had a most prosperous trade, and Mr. Thomas Hurst has very recently brought a large sum of money into the concern; he is a man of high character, much esteemed by his brethren, and beyond all question one of the best men of business in the book trade. Time is what they want, to make

good all their engagements; their affairs could only be wound up by themselves. The stock and property of a bookseller must not be treated in the ordinary way of mercantile affairs; nobody will, I think, refuse them time, and if they get it, I cannot anticipate anything but a favourable result. They have had a most admirable business, possessed a considerable capital, and were surrounded by wealthy connexions; the credit of the house stood in the first rank, but they unfortunately were bit by the mania of speculation so prevalent of late, and embarked rather deeply in a purchase of hops, which tended greatly to injure their general credit, and which I must consider as the cause of their disaster.

"I feel very unhappy in being absent from Edinburgh at this moment, but I came here, not expecting to meet such a deplorable state of things as that in which I found myself involved on the instant of my arrival. My time has been devoted for these two days to seeing parties most deeply interested, and considering whether it was possible that anything could yet be done to enable Hurst, Robinson, and Co. to resume payments; and indeed there are at the present moment propositions in the hands of bankers, who it is expected will come forward with a large sum of money, and I sincerely hope I may have the pleasure of transmitting you these glad tidings in the close of this letter.

"I have no doubt of the entire prudence of all Mr. Cadell's movements on the intelligence reaching him—the only advice I offered was to advise with you in the first instance, and also with Mr. Gibson-Craig, who has

ever been my steady friend and support on every occasion of difficulty. In the midst of the almost overwhelming distress by which I am surrounded, I have, I fear, little in the way of consolation to offer to my friends, further than the assurance that every hour of my future life shall be devoted to the exercise of every power and faculty which it may please Providence to permit me to use in assisting to recover the wreck which it has been my fate to encounter.

"I had a long interview with Mr. Lockhart yesterday, who feels as you would expect on the present crisis. I have put him in possession of the state of matters here, and generally as to those at a distance, which more materially affect him. With regard to my movements, I shall be very much regulated by the result of the application now making in the City, and think it probable I shall leave this in a day or so. I stood the journey up extremely well, and am nursing myself to-day in the prospect of another similar exertion, which will account to you for using the hand of my son on this painful occasion.—My dear Sir Walter, I am, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

To this Sir Walter sent the following kind and manly reply :—

"EDINBURGH, 21*st January*.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—I received yours, and am truly glad to see you sustain your spirits under these calamities, so unexpected when we last parted. I trust Messrs. Hurst and Robinson will find the means of going on. With regard to myself, whenever the secrecy of the mat-

ter was ended, and I was obliged to consult my friends and ask for time, all that I would have wished to have concealed was made known, and therefore I will make no further struggle, as it would serve no purpose but to render uncertain my personal funds, and me an insolvent instead of an indebted person.

"From what I hear, they are about to sequestrate Constable and Co., and will certainly do so unless you can come down and show them from your experience that their interest lies a different way. I am clear that a good trustee and time might save much money to the creditors, and that an accountant who will throw all into the market will suit the interest of all parties better, as you might be able to assure them a good composition. At any rate, I feel your interest lies here rather than in London, and that, do Hurst and Robinson what they like, the Princes Street establishment will be destroyed root and branch. Mr. Cadell is very gloomy about it, so am I, but it is impossible for him and me to help it.

"For myself, be my loss lighter or heavier, I will bear it manfully. Woodstock will be on the counter in a month, and you shall see that neither frost nor foul weather shall abate the spirit of, dear Constable, yours truly,

"WALTER SCOTT.

"Everybody has been kinder to me than another, especially the banking gentlemen; but it is sad thing for a proud man to need that sort of kindness."

MR. CONSTABLE to MR. LOCKHART.

"POLTON, BY LASSWADE, *January* 23, 1826.

"MY DEAR SIR,—You would, I trust, excuse my not having called on you before leaving London, the cause of which I hope my son's note would explain. I reached this yesterday, after a pretty smart journey, and have just returned from Edinburgh, after a day of anxious business. I had the pleasure of passing an hour with Sir Walter Scott, whom I found in very good health, and in the midst of his work as usual, and in a remarkable state of quiet—all things, respecting which we have so recently conversed, taken into account.

"I need not tell you how greatly delighted I was to find this state of matters in Castle Street. I wish I had any favourable report to make of our commercial concerns; the state of them I think rather worse than my anticipations when you and I last conversed on the subject. My every exertion and thought shall be devoted to the common or individual cause, but as to the extent of my usefulness in these respects, I cannot at this moment form any estimate,—assuring you, however, of my most perfect faithfulness and attachment, neither of which shall be shaken, whatever may occur. In matters of such delicacy I cannot be more explicit. You will, I am sure, forgive my using any pen but my own on the present occasion, being really so fatigued as not to be able to use my own.—And believe me, etc.,

"ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE.

"John Gibson Lockhart, Esq."

CHAPTER XXI.

Desperate condition of Constable and Company aggravated by want of cordiality between the partners—They separate—Sir Walter Scott decides to continue his connexion with Mr. Cadell—Extract from "the Life"—Letter from my father to Sir Walter Scott, with Sir Walter's reply—My father's last letter to Sir Walter Scott—Letter from Mr. Lockhart, and my father's reply—Mr. Cowan elected trustee on the sequestrated estate of Constable and Company—Claims and counter-claims.

THE condition of my father's firm was by this time, as we now see it, very hopeless, and was aggravated by the want of cordiality between the partners. Each of them was evidently desirous of parting from the other, while both were anxious to retain connexion with Sir Walter Scott. I shall not presume to blame—however much I may regret—the election that he made. I am sure that had it been agreeable to his rival suitors, he would unhesitatingly have gone on with both; and it will not, I think, be denied by any impartial reader of this history, that the claim of my father was a strong one.

On the 21st January Sir Walter writes in his Journal:—"I have seen Cadell, who is very much downcast for the risk of their copyrights being thrown away by a hasty sale. I suggested that if they went very cheap, some means might be fallen on to purchase them in. I fear the split betwixt Constable and Cadell will render impossible what might otherwise be hopeful enough. It

is the Italian race-horses, I think, which, instead of riders, have spurs tied to their sides, so as to prick them into a constant gallop."

On the 24th January the following entry occurs:—"Constable came yesterday, and saw me for half an hour. He seemed irritable, but kept his temper under command. Was a little shocked when I intimated that I was disposed to regard the present works in progress as my own. I think I saw two things:—1. That he is desirous to return into the management of his own affairs without Cadell, if he can. 2. That he relies on my connexion as the way of helping him out of the slough. Indeed, he said he was ruined utterly without my countenance. I certainly will befriend him if I can, but Constable without Cadell is like getting the clock without the pendulum—the one having the ingenuity, the other the caution of the business. I will see my way before making any bargain, and I will help them, I am sure, if I can, without endangering my last cast for freedom."

On the 26th Scott records:—"I called to-day at Constable's. Both parties [partners] seemed sure that Hurst and Robinson were to go on and pay. Strange that they should have stopped. Constable very anxious to have the husbanding of the books. I told him the truth—that I would be glad to have his assistance, and that he should have the benefit of the agency—but that he was to consider past transactions as no rule for settling those in future, since I must needs make the most out of my labours I could. *Item*, that for whoever might act for me, I would, of course, after what has happened, look

especially to the security. He said, 'If Hurst and Robinson were to go on, bank-notes would be laid down.' I conceive indeed that they would take Woodstock and Napoleon almost at loss, rather than break the connexion in the public eye."[1] Under the same date, Sir Walter makes an announcement which must have been received by the public with satisfaction nearly equal to his own,— "Gibson comes with a joyful face, announcing all the creditors had unanimously agreed to a private trust. This is handsome and confidential, and must warm my best efforts to get them out of the scrape. I will not doubt— to doubt is to lose. Sir William Forbes took the chair, and behaved, as he has ever done, with the generosity of ancient faith and early friendship."

On the 8th March Sir Walter tells us that "Mr. Cowan, a good and able man, is chosen trustee in Constable's affairs, with full powers. From what I hear, the poor man is not sensible of the nature of his own situation; for myself, I have succeeded in putting the matter perfectly out of my mind, since I cannot help it."

This my father might perhaps have also succeeded in doing had he seen before him any prospect of retrieving his fortune, and paying his debts; but his views of the value of the literary property of his house, though

[1] This passage in the Diary is omitted by Mr. Lockhart in the Life. He ventures also occasionally to alter the sense in his quotations from that interesting source. On March 14th the original document has the following entry :—"Bade Constable and Cadell farewell, and had a brisk walk *with them*, which enables me to face the desolation here with more spirit." In the Life (vol. vi. p. 262) Mr. Lockhart has it "a brisk walk *home*," without notice of companions.

justified by its after productiveness, were regarded as utopian by the creditors of Archibald Constable and Company, and those who acted for them. The breach between the partners was, unhappily, complete, and Sir Walter Scott decided, Mr. Lockhart tells us in the following passage,[1] without hesitation, to continue his connexion with Mr. Robert Cadell:—

"That gentleman's connexion with Constable was, from circumstances of which the reader may have traced various little indications, not likely to be renewed after the catastrophe of their old copartnership. They were now endeavouring to establish themselves in separate businesses; and each was, of course, eager to secure the countenance of Sir Walter. He did not hesitate a moment. He conceived that Constable had acted in such a manner by him, especially in urging him to borrow large sums of money for his support after all chance of recovery was over, that he had more than forfeited all claims on his confidence; and Mr. Cadell's frank conduct in warning Ballantyne and him against Constable's last mad proposal about a guarantee for £20,000, had produced a strong impression in his favour."

Had Sir Walter Scott agreed to afford the guarantee suggested by my father, his creditors would not indeed have received more than the twenty shillings in the pound which he honourably paid them; but those of Constable and Company might have had good cause to differ from Mr. Lockhart in opinion as to the insanity or soundness of the suggestion. Mr. Cadell's written correspondence with my father, during the crisis that ended in the sequestration of their literary property, indicates no difference of opinion from his partner as to the steps to be adopted by them for averting, if possible, the great calamity, and had the "mad proposal" been acceded to,

[1] See Life, vol. vi. p. 311.

it seems not impossible that the firm might have continued to exist, and that, under the skilful management of Mr. Cadell, who survived my father upwards of twenty years, their liabilities, enormous as they were, might have been honourably met.

It is instructive, and to me consolatory, that Sir Walter Scott, in his written communications with my father, even after the catastrophe of which Mr. Lockhart has declared my father to have been the author, manifests no diminution of regard. The wound inflicted by preference of his partner was, I do not doubt, acutely felt, but Sir Walter was of so genial and kind a nature that he desired the blow should fall as lightly as possible; and the following extract from the first letter to his son-in-law after bankruptcy had been proclaimed, tells not only of his own brave spirit, but of his consideration for those who were involved with himself in its results. He writes to Mr. Lockhart, on the 20th January 1826, in the following terms:—

"Whenever I heard that Constable had made a *cessio fori*, I thought it became me to make public how far I was concerned in these matters, and to offer my fortune so far as it was prestable, and the completion of my literary engagements (the better thing almost of the two) to make good all claims upon Ballantyne and Co.; and even supposing that neither Hurst and Co. nor Constable and Co. ever pay a penny they owe me, my old age will be far from destitute—even if my right hand should lose its cunning. This is the *very worst* that can befall me; but I have little doubt that, with ordinary management, the affairs of those houses will turn out favourably. It is needless to add, that I will not engage myself, as Constable desires, for £20,000 more—or £2000—or £200. I have advanced enough already to pay other people's debts, and must now pay my own. If our friend Constable had set out a fortnight earlier, nothing of all this would have happened; but he let the hour of distress precede the hour of provision, and he and others must pay for it. Yet don't hint this to him,

poor fellow—it is an infirmity of nature. . . . It is easy, no doubt, for any friend to blame me for entering into connexion with commercial matters at all. But I wish to know what I could have done better—excluded from the bar, and then from all profits for six years, by my colleague's prolonged life. Literature was not in those days what poor Constable has made it; and, with my little capital, I was glad to make commercially the means of supporting my family. I got but £600 for the Lay of the Last Minstrel, and—it was a price that made men's hair stand on end—£1000 for Marmion. I have been far from suffering by James Ballantyne. I owe it to him to say, that his difficulties, as well as his advantages, are owing to me. I trusted too much to Constable's assurances of his own and his correspondent's stability,—but yet I believe he was only sanguine. The upshot is just what Hurst and Co. and Constable may be able to pay me; if 15s. in the pound, I shall not complain of my loss, for I have gained many thousands in my day. But while I live I shall regret the downfall of Constable's house, for never did there exist so intelligent and so liberal an establishment. They went too far when money was plenty, that is certain; yet if every author in Britain had taxed himself half a year's income, he should have kept up the house which first broke in upon the monopoly of the London trade, and made letters what they now are."

Those of his family who were with him throughout his troubles knew how sincere was my father's attachment to Sir Walter Scott, and how cordial his desire for his happiness and success; but intercourse between them was necessarily now very limited, and confined to occasional expressions of goodwill. On the 25th of December, my father communicated to Sir Walter the following interesting extract from a letter he had received :—

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"PARK PLACE, EDINBURGH, 23*d Decr.* 1826.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I have the pleasure of sending you the extract of a letter which I received on Saturday

from Mrs. Campbell of Stonefield, containing an anecdote of Buonaparte, which she wished communicated to you. I need not tell you anything of Mrs. Campbell, she being, I daresay, well known to you. She is descended of the celebrated Dr. Pitcairn by her grandmother, Lady Kellie, to which, were anything wanted to recommend or certify her veracity, about which she seems anxious in the present instance, I am sure I need add nothing farther to you.

"I was very happy to hear that your health had improved in your excursion to the Continent. I have been very unwell since June, but have rallied wonderfully, and am looking forward with some satisfaction to an active life again.—I am, etc. A. C."

Extract from Letter of Mrs. Campbell.

"If, as we hear, Sir Walter Scott is writing the History of Buonaparte, you may tell him that the late Sir Charles Stuart (of Bute) told me that when he commanded our army in Corsica, Buonaparte wished to come into our service. I asked what rank he expected; he said he believed he would have accepted a Lt.-Colonelcy. This is a fact that I know has been doubted, but you see Sir C. Stuart's authority is decisive. Remember, however, I won't have my name appear in print. You may perhaps vouch for me to Sir Walter that I am not addicted to lying, or you may refer him to my friends, the Misses Hepburn, or Hector Macdonald; but likely he knows the thing already, in which case say nothing. Sir

Charles Stuart was very angry that Buonaparte's offer was rejected."

On the 5th of January 1827 Sir Walter replied as follows :—

SIR WALTER SCOTT to MR. CONSTABLE.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—I am much obliged by your letter, and for the enclosure, and also by the account of your health. Mine has been but so-so, otherwise I would have been out to see you. I had a vile bowel-complaint, which ended in a rheumatic cold; now the rheumatism has settled in my only serviceable knee, and has nailed me to my chair, unless when I have some one to drag me up and down. But I am getting better, and the confinement rather favours hard work than otherwise. I am much obliged to Mrs. Campbell for the curious anecdote of Buonaparte. I had heard it before; but in consequence of some inquiries made at Lord Minto and Count Pozzo di Borgo, I was inclined to consider it as apocryphal. The report may have arisen from some similarity of name. I should like to know more precisely the time when the offer was made. B. was but a short time in Corsica before quarrelling with Paoli, after which he was decidedly in the French interest. His rank was Captain of Artillery and Lieutenant-Colonel of the National Guards, and as he was then totally unknown, his expectations of a lieutenant-colonelcy in the British service seems rather romantic. I would be particularly happy to speak to Mrs. Campbell on the subject, if she would carry her kindness so far.

"I am, with compliments to Mrs. Constable, my dear Sir, yours truly, WALTER SCOTT.

"*Given from our arm-chair, Thursday, January 5th,* 1827."

So far as I am aware, my father's last letter to Sir Walter Scott was the following, to which he may have replied, though the only reference I find to it is in a note to James Ballantyne, which was forwarded to my father:—

MR. CONSTABLE to SIR WALTER SCOTT.

"EDINBURGH, 20*th Jan.* 1827.

"DEAR SIR WALTER,—I received your kind letter of 5th curt. from Abbotsford. I hope the rheumatism has departed. It is a teasing complaint, and was long my companion; fleecy hosiery and flannel I found the best means of getting rid of it, and my safeguards afterwards.

"I have delayed much longer than I ought to have done in informing you that the first number of my Miscellany was issued on the 6th current, and has met with very considerable success. Indeed, the praises of the plan in all parts of the country promise more success than I could have anticipated in the present depressed state of trade, and I find I have no fewer than three rivals,—all originating from the plan of my work,—but none of them, I think, constructed in the popular manner in which mine appears to have been. I have just had recourse to Mr. Ballantyne's presses for aid in completing Captain Hall's Voyages, and I am anxious to give as full a share of the printing of the work to my old friend as circumstances may admit of. Among your other kind aids in

the formation of my undertaking, you did me the favour to prepare an admirable Preface for the Memoirs of the Marchioness Larochejaquelein, which has been in Mr. Ballantyne's hands above a year. I should like to proceed with that work now, should it be your pleasure to continue the favour to me. I was desirous of having the honour of making this communication to you in person, and of offering for your acceptance a fine-paper copy of the first three volumes of the Miscellany, which accompanies this. I have another copy binding for the Library at Abbotsford, which I shall take care to have ready before you leave town. My health is not yet so far re-established as to enable me to leave my house, where I have been in a greater or less degree an invalid since June last, but I hope to be permitted to move about again ere long.

"There has been no dedication-copy forwarded to the King, which, I am aware, ought to have been done in the first instance, and I know not whether it can be done now. Formerly, I believe, Captain Hall would gladly have been the bearer of the book, but I have not ascertained whether that most generous and active friend of mine has any inclination to do so now. In this matter, if not asking too much, I would be desirous of being guided by any advice which you might be good enough to afford me.—I am, etc. A. C."

Mr. Ballantyne's note above referred to is as follows:—

"P. O., *Friday, Feb. 2d*, 1827.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I have great pleasure in enclosing you

a card from Sir Walter Scott on the subject we spoke of. Keep it, for it is yours rather than mine.—I am, my dear Sir, yours very truly, JAMES BALLANTYNE."

"MY DEAR JAMES,—The Introduction to La Vendée was written for Mr. Constable's Miscellany, and of course is at his own disposal; I heartily wish it may be of service to him. I only retain the privilege of adding it to my other works hereafter, if I shall think proper.

"By the bye, how do the present prose works come on? I have two characters to send you, Duke of Buccleuch and Lord Somerville. Are you ready for them, and generally, at what point is the work?—Yours truly,

"W. S."

Were we entitled to gauge the actual feelings of Mr. Lockhart by the tone of his correspondence with my father a year after the sad catastrophe, he had not yet attained to the severity of judgment manifested in his treatment of him in the Life of Sir Walter Scott. The following letter would rather indicate a high appreciation of my father's character, and a sincere interest in his welfare and success:—

MR. LOCKHART to MR. CONSTABLE.

"WIMBLEDON, SURREY, *January* 29, 1827.

"MY DEAR SIR,—I am truly happy to hear that the Miscellany has started with so much prospect of success. I received some weeks ago the three volumes, and have in them re-read with renewed pleasure our friend Captain Hall's narratives, to which the conversation with Napoleon

is a most interesting and valuable addition. I suppose I am right in believing that it never was in print till now, and that a dim recollection I had of some things in it arose from my having seen the Captain's MS., among others, at Abbotsford.

"Since you think that my Life of Robert Burns is worth the asking for *now*, I am sure I shall have much pleasure in writing it; but, unfortunately, considering the matter as at an end, I had some time ago boxed up all the materials I had collected in London, and that in such a way that I fear I cannot, without great difficulty, get at them for some time. I trust nothing is to prevent my spending the chief part of next summer in Scotland, and shall look forward to *Burns* as my work during that time.

"As to *two* volumes, I doubt whether that would not be too much for a *Life* of Burns. If a selection from his poetry is to be included, the case is altered, and indeed I think it would be doing a service to his fame to place before the public those pieces by which alone he merits his place, apart altogether from his mawkish attempts in the English dialect, and also those Scottish performances, the coarseness of which much overbalances their wit, and which at any rate should never be included in such a work as your Miscellany. I shall be happy to hear what you have to say to these suggestions, and of course to see the original pieces of Burns, in your possession. I have myself obtained several trifles of his in MS. from various quarters, and curious enough *memoranda* from two or three friends who recollect the poet in the flesh.

"I have been unwell of late, and have not been to town or seen Mr. Murray since I received your letter, so that I can say nothing as to the Life of Nelson affair. I understand, however, that Murray has nothing to do personally with the scheme of the 'National Library,' the management of which is altogether with its editor, Mr. Charles Knight; so that there is the less chance of its interfering with your proposal. The programme of the National Library says so much, that no one can believe it will do *all* it promises; and I sincerely hope there need to be no great collision between it and the Miscellany.

"I shall communicate what you say to Mr. Gleig. I am sorry, however, to tell *you* that I *privately know* he has made application to the Duke of Wellington about the *Life*, and received in the kindest but firmest manner his Grace's refusal to have any hand in furnishing materials for any such work to be published during his own time. Gleig has, of course, abundant materials at command independently of such sources; yet this is a great loss. To tell you the plain truth, I have a very strong suspicion that the Duke means to be his own historian; and those who know him best, all agree that he is as well qualified (almost) to narrate battles as to fight them.

"I hope, now you have seen the storm go by, you may live to see many fair days yet. On one thing I am sure you may rely, and that is that all literary men wish to see you hold up your head again; for *they* know how great is the debt that they all, as a body, owe to you personally for having thrown so much of new life and vigour into

the conduct of the profession, of which it is to be hoped you will long be an ornament.—Very truly yours,

"J. G. LOCKHART."

On the 16th February my father wrote from Edinburgh in reply :—

"MY DEAR SIR,—I was favoured rather more than a week ago with your kind letter of the 29th ult. I owe many apologies to you for not writing to you sooner on the subject of the Life of Burns, which you had kindly undertaken to write for my Miscellany. It was arranged many months ago that I should take up that work, but a series of many months of ill health prevented my embarking in the undertaking with the necessary energy.

"In addition to that, I had such entire confidence in your friendship that I delayed the communication to you somewhat from that feeling. I am aware that circumstances are changed with me, and I ought not to have taken the liberty of remaining so long silent as to induce you to think that I had abandoned the plan.

"I candidly confess to you that I should feel much mortification were you not to give me the Life of Burns. It would prove to my interest very greatly were it possible for you to give me the work so that it might appear this year, and if you could extend it to two volumes you would do a vast thing for me, and gratify the literary world very much.

"The sale of the Miscellany entitles me to say that I have no doubt I shall be able to satisfy you as to the copy-money, and to pay it either at the commencement of

the printing of your work, or at the conclusion of it, as might suit your wishes and finances at the time. The kindness of some friends enables me also to state this matter with full confidence that it will be made good. If the work is to be extended to two volumes, there will be new terms as to price to arrange on this subject. I trust that you will not fail to give me your sentiments without reserve or hesitation.

"I feel particularly obliged by all your kind expressions and good wishes for my future welfare, which I know you have not been backward to express on more *than one occasion*, of which I have heard with much gratitude. I have the prospect of being obliged to go to London early next month, but the business that carries me there will not, I expect, detain me many days.

"I have not yet heard anything from Mr. Murray, but I have no right to trouble you on such a subject, and confess my error in having entered upon it in my last. Excuse my being obliged to use the hand of a confidential amanuensis.—I am, etc., ARCHIBALD CONSTABLE."

The creditors of Constable and Company, in electing as their trustee Alexander Cowan, whom Sir Walter Scott justly characterized as "a good and able man," not only chose prudently for their own interests, but gave confidence of justice and consideration to the bankrupts, and smoothed the way for dealing with the complicated relations of the firm with that of James Ballantyne and Co.

Sir Walter's entry in his diary on December 18, 1825, already quoted, "We shall have made some *kittle* ques-

tions of literary property amongst us," was amply realized in the legal determination of the relative liabilities of James Ballantyne and Company and Archibald Constable and Company. In a paper by Mr. Cowan, dated June 1826, *nine* distinct claims are brought against Sir Walter Scott's estate on account of contracts pending or unfulfilled. These were as follows:—

I. A Romance, in three volumes, or a Novel in four volumes. Contracted for on March 7th, 1823.
II. Another contract for a similar work, entered into on October 29th, 1823.
III. The Life of Napoleon Buonaparte,[1] 1825.
IV. Woodstock,[2] 1825.
V. Miscellaneous Prose Works, 1825.
VI. History of Scotland, 1816.
VII. Travels on the Continent, 1818.
VIII. An Edition of the Works of Shakespeare, 1824.
IX. A claim for books, paper, and other miscellaneous property in the hands of Messrs. Ballantyne and Co.

On the other hand, several counter-claims were made in the interest of Sir Walter Scott. One of these was for the restoration of the Waverley Manuscripts which had been presented by him to my father in 1823, on the ground that conditions alleged to have been attached to the gift had become incapable of fulfilment. By the award of the Hon. Lord Newton, who had been appointed arbiter

[1] In contracting for the Life of Napoleon, allusion is made by Mr. Ballantyne to the fact that two novels, already contracted for, are still unwritten.

[2] The claim of the creditors of Constable and Company on the Life of Napoleon and Woodstock was disallowed, and Sir Walter enters in his diary of April 3, 1826:—"I have the extraordinary and gratifying news that Woodstock is sold for £8228; all ready money—a matchless sale for less than three months' work."

on the claim, the property of these Manuscripts was adjudged to rest with my father's creditors, and they were accordingly sold in London for £317.[1]

It is to be regretted that I have been unable to recover the Sederunt-book of the Commissioners under the bankruptcy of Constable and Company, from which I could have given authentic details on all points connected with

[1] They consisted of—

1. The Monastery—Three volumes perfect, in one.
2. Guy Mannering—Three volumes.
3. Old Mortality—Three volumes, perfect.
4. The Antiquary—Three volumes, perfect.
5. Rob Roy—Three volumes, perfect.
6. Peveril of the Peak—Four volumes bound in two, perfect.
7. Waverley—
   Vol. i. from the beginning of chapter v. to end of chapter xi.
   ii. from the middle of chapter vi. to the end. Imperfect.
   iii. from chapter xiii. to end, with the exception of chapter xxiii.
8. The Abbot—Vol. i. wants folio 7. Hiatus from folio 30 to 54.
   Vol. ii. Hiatus from folio 5 to 11, and from 28 to 32.
   iii. Imperfect. Ends at folio 44.
9. Ivanhoe—End of vol. ii.
   Vol. iii. Contains from folio 1 to 29, and from 50 to 57.
10. The Pirate—Vol. i. Imperfect, ending at folio 42.
    Vol. ii. Wanting.
    iii. From folio 46 to the end.
11. The Fortunes of Nigel—Vols. i. and ii., perfect.
    Vol. iii. ends at folio 60.
12. Kenilworth—Vol. i. Begins at folio 16, wants folios 38, 40, 59, 60.
    Vol. ii. Wants folios 15-18.
    iii. Begins at folio 4; the rest perfect.
13. The Bride of Lammermoor—61 pages of manuscript.

it. The only quasi-authoritative document I possess is a statement by Mr. Robert Goldie, clerk to the trustee for the creditors of the concern.

On the 15th March 1826, my brother David addressed the following letter to Mr. Cowan :—

"1 St. Vincent Street, *March 15th*, 1826.

"My dear Sir,—I hope the interest which I have in the concerns of Archibald Constable and Co. will be a sufficient apology for the request I am about to make.

"I wish to have a memorandum of the statement submitted to the last meeting of creditors, and I should like to know the amount of the claims on both sides between A. C. and Co., Ballantyne and Co., and Sir Walter Scott. I shall also feel obliged by your informing me of the amount of the claims on Hurst, Robinson, and Co., and of Hurst, Robinson, and Co.'s claim on A. C. and Co. here. Perhaps you can oblige me with all this in the course of a day or two. Would you also favour me with a copy of the valuations of the copyrights in 1821, and one also of the particulars of the recent valuation?

"I beg you will excuse this trouble, and believe me to be, yours very truly, David Constable."

Mr. Cowan to Mr. David Constable.

"10 Princes Street, 16*th March* 1826.

"My dear Sir,—You shall at all times be welcome to every kind of information you may want in the affairs you mention.

"The state of them submitted to last meeting is, together with some others of the papers you mention, in

the hands of Mr. Walter Dickson, W.S., Royal Circus. He will show them to you, and allow you to take such extracts or copies as you may wish; and if you will call here for me to-day from 11 to 12, or to-morrow or Monday from 12 to 2, I shall be happy to give you all further information you may desire to have.—Yours ever truly,

" A. COWAN.

" David Constable, Esq."

On the same day Mr. Cowan's clerk made the following communication :—

" David Constable, Esq.

" 10 PRINCES STREET, 16*th March* 1826.

" SIR,—All the documents on which the statement of the 8th inst. was founded, with the statement itself, being in the hands of Mr. Dickson, I have ventured to give you from memory *the substance of the report*, which I trust will answer your purpose in the meantime; and, as Mr. Cowan has already informed you, the most minute particulars will be furnished you whenever the Sederunt-book is in his hands, if you do not choose to call on Mr. Dickson yourself.

" In the annexed statement you will observe that no notice is taken of the private debts of the individual partners. In both instances they are about equal to the private property.

" The accommodation-bills between A. C. and Co. and Ballantyne and Co. are stated as exactly equal—say £29,000 on each side; and for value, it would appear from A. C. and Co.'s books that the latter are entitled to rank

for £3600, but until further investigation it is impossible to say how the account may really stand.

"The original scroll of the estimated value of the copyrights is so imperfect that I fear it would answer no good purpose to enclose it at present, but I now hand you copy of the valuation in 1821, and the particulars of the £32,000 taken credit for in the annexed state you can have whenever the Sederunt-book and documents are returned by Mr. Dickson.—I am, Sir, your very obedient servant,

"R. GOLDIE."

"*Substance of Interim Factor's Report, 8th March* 1826.

"That he had examined with as much accuracy as the time and state of the books admitted, the various items of the account then exhibited, and had no doubt but in all the leading features it would be found substantially correct, particularly as regarded the primary obligations of the house on acceptances, bonds, and open accounts, amounting together to £133,800.

"That the liabilities of the house, as indorsers on bills discounted through various channels, appeared to be £182,000, on acceptances granted for behoof of others, £12,500, and on bond to Mr. Kermack, £5040—in all, £199,800.

"Of the bills discounted and on hand £88,000 were the acceptances of Hurst and Co., and as these and many of those already dishonoured were chiefly in the hands of bankers who appeared at present to owe balances, it was to be apprehended that a great portion of these balances would be absorbed before the holders obtained full payment of these dishonoured bills.

"That of the bills on hand £4800 were acceptances of Hurst and Co. and many of the others already known to be bad.

Acceptances, . .	£98,600	Cash on hand, . .	£1,600
Due to bankers and others on cash accounts, bonds, etc., .	6,800	Bills on hand, . .	8,000
Due on open accounts,	24,600	Due by bankers, .	17,000
Ballantyne and Co. claim	3,600	Due on accounts, .	9,000
		Stock valued at .	20,000
		Copyrights, . .	32,000
		A. C.'s private property,	11,000
		R. C.'s do.,	1,800
		Expended on works in progress, . .	1,100
			£101,500
		Deficiency,	32,100
	£133,600		£133,600"

My father, as may readily be supposed, was meanwhile sadly depressed in spirits; for although the prospects of success for his new undertaking, the Miscellany, were very encouraging, his bodily health was unsatisfactory, and he was closely beset by troubles of various kinds. Strength gradually declined, and though his mind remained active as ever, it was evident to those around him that the end was not far distant. Dropsical symptoms increased in vehemence, his appetite fell away, and the portly man became wasted and feeble.

CHAPTER XXII.

The last day of my father's life—Quotations from Mr. Lockhart—Retrospect of my father's career—Letter from Sir James Gibson-Craig on the relations between Sir Walter Scott and my father—Mr. Thomas Thomson on Mr. Lockhart's "Life"—Letters from David Constable to his brother Henry—Conclusion.

THE morning of the 21st of July 1827 was spent by me in my father's sick-room. His interest in the welfare of his children was intense and unremitting; he had never spared expense in promoting our education, and was painfully anxious when any one of us suffered from illness that threatened serious consequences; but it was only with the younger members of his family, or when an elder one was quite alone with him, that on ordinary occasions he allowed the deep tenderness of his feeling to find expression in words. I well remember that on this eventful day to him and to all of us, he was specially tender, and spoke to me from time to time in a more than usually loving manner.

It happened that of all his family, on the morning in question I was the only one at home. My younger brothers and sister had gone with their mother to sea-bathing quarters in the immediate neighbourhood, and my elder sisters were also absent from Edinburgh. My brothers David and Henry had engaged to join us shortly

after noon for an early dinner, but in the morning my father and I were for an hour or two alone together. As I sat reading near a window, he suddenly called me to nim, and sent me to his private writing-table, minutely directing me where I should find a small box, which, when I brought to him, he opened with evident emotion, and took out a bunch of withered flowers. "These," he said after a time, "are flowers I gathered at Polton for my beloved Catherine the morning that she left me; Mary has told me that she had them beside her on her deathbed, and now they lie on mine."[1]

After a time, when I had restored them to the drawer from which they had been taken, my father called me again to his bedside, and taking my hand, he said, "Dear Tom, I leave you very poor; had it pleased God to spare my life for a few years, it might have been otherwise; but I trust that at least you will find the name you bear no disadvantage to you."[2] He spoke tenderly of rejoining lost friends, and gave me many wise and loving counsels.

The day wore on, my brothers joined us, and after they and I had dined in an adjoining room, our father, who had risen, and was seated in an easy chair, sent for David, and

[1] After a lapse of nearly fifty years these flowers are still in my possession, among many other relics which my father had carefully preserved of joys and sorrows past.

[2] To that name I have owed many kind and cherished friends; and it was as a representative of Archibald Constable that in 1839 Her Majesty conferred on me an honour highly valued. I allude to my appointment as Queen's Printer, on the expiration of the Patent of Sir David Hunter Blair and Mrs. Tyndall Bruce.

had been conversing with him for some time on subjects of interest to both, when Henry and I were startled by a sound, which once heard can never be forgotten.

We hastened to our father's room, and found him supported in the arms of his son, with his head drooping on his breast. Henry ran at once for medical assistance, while, sinking on my knees, I looked up into the eyes which to the last were fixed on mine. The summer sun was shining brightly, but gloom fell suddenly upon my spirit, and, for the first time in my life, I felt myself alone in the world. My father had been far more to me than until then I had realized.

In the sixth volume of Mr. Lockhart's Life of Sir Walter Scott,[1] there occurs a passage, on which, should it need a comment, one will be found in the head and heart of those who have accompanied me thus far in my narration. It is somewhat painful to me even to quote it, and it must have been doubly painful to my father's partner, who did all he thought he could to restrain and correct statements of the biographer on this and similar occasions. The passage I refer to is as follows :—

"I need not recapitulate the history of the connexion between these Ballantyne firms and that of Constable. It was traced as accurately as my means permitted in the preceding chapters, with an eye to the catastrophe. I am willing to believe that kindly feelings had no small share in inducing Constable to uphold the credit of John Ballantyne and Company, in their several successive struggles to avoid the exposure of bankruptcy. He was, with pitiable foibles enough, and grievous faults, a man of warm, and therefore, I hardly doubt, of sympathizing temperament. Vain to excess, proud at the same time, haughty,

[1] Pp. 113, 114.

arrogant, presumptuous, despotic—he had still, perhaps, a heart.[1] Persons who knew him longer and better than I did, assure me of their conviction that, in spite of many direct professional hindrances and thwartings, the offspring (as *he* viewed matters) partly of Tory jealousy, and partly of poetical caprice—he had, even at an early period of his life, formed a genuine affection for Scott's person, as well as a most profound veneration for his genius. I think it very possible that he began his assistance of the Ballantyne companies mainly under this generous influence—and I also believe that he had, in different ways, a friendly leaning in favour of both James and John themselves. But when he, in his overweening self-sufficiency, thought it involved no mighty hazard to indulge his better feelings, as well as his lordly vanity, in shielding these friends from commercial dishonour, he had estimated but loosely the demands of the career of speculation on which he was himself entering. And by and by, when, advancing by one mighty plunge after another in that vast field, he felt in his own person the threatenings of more signal ruin than could have befallen them, this 'Napoleon of the press'—still as of old buoyed up to the ultimate result of his grand operations by the most fulsome flatteries of imagination—appears to have tossed aside very summarily all scruples about the extent to which he might be entitled to tax their sustaining credit in requital. The Ballantynes, if they had comprehended all the bearings of the case, were not the men to consider grudgingly the demands of this nature, founded on service so important; and who can doubt that Scott viewed them from a chivalrous altitude? It is easy to see, that the moment the obligations became reciprocal, there arose extreme peril of their coming to be hopelessly complicated. It is equally clear, that he ought to have applied on these affairs, as their complication thickened, the acumen which he exerted, and rather prided himself in exerting, on smaller points of worldly business, to the utmost. That he did not, I must always regard as the enigma of his personal history; but various incidents in that history, which I have already narrated, prove incontestably that he had never done so; and I am unable to account for this having been the case, except on the supposition that his confidence in the resources of Constable and the prudence of James Ballantyne was so entire, that he willingly absolved himself from all duty of active and thorough-going superinspection."

[1] Such in the *posthumous* estimation of Sir Walter Scott's biographer was the man whose character we have seen reflected in the mirror of his active and not useless life. Will any reader refuse to give my father the benefit of Mr. Lockhart's generous admission?

The account given by Mr. Lockhart of the bill transactions between Sir Walter Scott and Messrs. Constable and Company is so absurd, and their origin and end are so clearly stated in a letter from Sir James Gibson-Craig, which I shall presently quote, that it requires no further refutation. It is, besides, repudiated by the Messrs. Ballantyne themselves.[1] Mr. Lockhart says:—

"He could never have foreseen a step which Constable took in the frenzied excitement of his day of pecuniary alarm. Owing to the original habitual irregularities of John Ballantyne, it had been adopted as the regular plan between that person and Constable, that, whenever the latter signed a bill for the purpose of the other's raising money among the bankers, there should, in case of his neglecting to take that bill up before it fell due, be deposited a counter-bill, signed by Ballantyne, on which Constable might, if need were, raise a sum equivalent to that for which he had pledged his credit. I am told that this is an usual enough course of procedure among speculative merchants; and it may be so. But mark the issue. The plan went on under James's management, just as John had begun it. Under his management also—such was the incredible looseness of it—the *counter-bills*, meant only for being sent into the market in the event of the *primary bills* being threatened with dishonour—these instruments of safeguard for Constable against contingent danger were allowed to lie uninquired about in Constable's desk, until they had swelled to a truly monstrous 'sheaf of stamps.' Constable's hour of distress darkened about him, and he rushed with these to the money-changers. They were nearly all flung into circulation in the course of this maddening period of panic. And by this one circumstance it came to pass, that, supposing Ballantyne and Co. to have, at the day of reckoning, obligations against them, in consequence of bill transactions with Constable, to the extent of £25,000, they were legally responsible for £50,000."[2]

So long as my father still lived, no discreditable im-

[1] See "Reply to Mr. Lockhart's pamphlet, entitled The Ballantyne Humbug handled," p. 123.

[2] See Life, vol. vi. pp. 117, 118.

putation was ventured on—at least published—either by Mr. Lockhart or any one else. It was not until death had sealed his lips, and a sad visitation of temporary insanity (induced by the disastrous circumstances consequent on the failure of Constable and Company) had been presumed to silence the only member of my father's family sufficiently cognisant of past events to come forward for their refutation; it was not until Sir Walter Scott himself had passed away, that the flood of calumny was poured forth, which has been allowed to flow almost unchecked until the present day.

I well remember the satisfaction with which Mr. Cadell read to me, in 1837, the passage, in which my father was introduced by Mr. Lockhart to his readers,[1] in comparison with, or rather in contrast to, the Messrs. Ballantyne; and I have not forgotten that my own feelings of satisfaction were diminished rather than heightened by the disparagement. At that stage of his undertaking the biographer conceived that it would be sufficient for his distinguished subject that James and John Ballantyne should be represented as unprincipled adventurers, in order to account for the pecuniary troubles and eventual ruin of Sir Walter Scott, but as time drew on he found it necessary also to sacrifice Messrs. Constable and Company.

We have seen that, until 1814,—when the difficulties of Ballantyne and Co., and the private necessities of Sir Walter Scott for the purchase of land, led to an unholy alliance that soon resulted in a series of bills and counter-

[1] See Life, vol. ii. pp. 198-200.

bills, which eventually ruined all concerned,—my father's commercial career had been one of unbroken and perhaps unparalleled success. At the age of fourteen years he had left home to be apprenticed to an Edinburgh bookseller; seven years later he was a married man, in business on his own account, and had established personal relations with many of the most distinguished scholars and book-collectors of the period. In 1802 he was selected by Mr. Sydney Smith, Mr. Jeffrey, and the other projectors of the Edinburgh Review, as the most suitable publisher of that Journal, and, in the following year, he attracted as a partner Mr. Alexander Gibson Hunter, who, after seven years, retired from the young concern with an addition to his fortune of £21,000.[1]

It is true that Mr. Lockhart tells us[2] that my father overpaid "Mr. Hunter *out* of the concern at the Cross, to the tune of some £10,000 or £12,000—a blow from which the firm never recovered." This may be so, but it did not prevent Mr. Cadell joining it immediately afterwards, nor his brother-in-law, Mr. Robert Cathcart, stepping into Mr. Hunter's place, and making good the capital which that gentleman had withdrawn. A serious calamity, however, was at hand, by the death in the following year of Mr. Cathcart, when the surviving partners were left to carry on, without his prudent counsels, and with greatly diminished resources, a rapidly-increasing business.

Severe as was this blow, and crippling as the necessity must have been, to repay within a limited period the

[1] See *ante*, vol. i. p. 160. [2] See Life, vol. vi. p. 176.

capital advanced by Mr. Cathcart, there is no reason to doubt, that with my father's successful enterprise, and the cautious management of Mr. Cadell, the concern would ere long have reached a secure foundation, but for the opportunity of alliance—too tempting to be resisted—with the most successful and prolific author of that, or indeed of any day.

We have seen that in the year 1814, the *accommodation* which, before the rupture in 1808, had been to a limited amount afforded by my father's firm to Ballantyne and Company, was largely increased and rapidly extending.

The late Sir James Gibson-Craig, the steadiest and best friend my father ever had, who was consulted by him in every critical emergency of his life, had often told me that if I ever desired authentic testimony with reference to the origin and progress of the fatal system that led to my father's ruin and that of Sir Walter Scott, I might apply to him. Feeling that an occasion like the present might one day arise, when the testimony of a witness at once so competent and so thoroughly informed might be invaluable, I requested Sir James in the following letter to give me a written statement, which he kindly did:—

THOMAS CONSTABLE to SIR JAMES GIBSON-CRAIG.

"EDINBURGH, 11 THISTLE ST., *Nov. 24th*, 1848.

"MY DEAR SIR JAMES,—If not giving yourself too much trouble, you would confer a great obligation on me by stating in writing your recollection of the origin of the

system of accommodation-bills which proved so disastrous to my father and Sir Walter Scott.

"Circumstances may arise years hence which may render it not only desirable but expedient to rescue my father's memory from the imputations laid on it by Mr. Lockhart, and your testimony on the subject above alluded to would be all-important.

"Your own kindness and my natural anxiety for the reputation of my father will excuse my troubling you in this matter.—I am, etc., THOMAS CONSTABLE."

SIR JAMES GIBSON-CRAIG to T. CONSTABLE.

"RICCARTON, *25th Nov.* 1848.

"MY DEAR SIR,—In answer to your letter of yesterday, I beg to state that I remember perfectly your father showing me a letter from Sir Walter Scott, written in great distress, informing him that his affairs were in such a state that he must call a meeting of his creditors, and requesting your father to do so.

"After consulting with me, your father wrote Sir Walter that he hoped it would be unnecessary to call a meeting, and that if he would come to Edinburgh he thought he could devise means for avoiding so disagreeable a measure.

"Sir Walter came, and by your father's advice he applied to the Duke of Buccleuch to assist him in raising money by annuity, which he did to the amount, I think, of £4000.

"Your father proposed that Sir Walter should engage to write works for the press, on the faith of which your

father agreed to give him bills to a very considerable extent, and he accordingly did so.

"I believe this was the first transaction in bills Sir Walter and your father had. These transactions afterwards gradually extended to a large amount, and it became their practice that Constable and Co. should give bills to Sir Walter, which he discounted; and as a counter security, Sir Walter gave similar sums to the company, of which the company made no use.

"After this had gone on for some time, your father became very uneasy, and wished to put an end to the dangerous system in which he had embarked; and he told me that he had gone to Sir Walter, taking with him all the bills he had received, and proposed to Sir Walter to give up these bills, on condition of Sir Walter returning those Constable and Co. had given him.

"Sir Walter said he could not possibly do so; on which your father told that in that case he could not meet the engagements for Sir Walter without discounting the bills granted by him. This was accordingly done, and led to discounting to an immense amount, a double set of bills, which could not fail to produce, and did actually produce, the ruin of both parties. . . . . .

"My dear Sir, very truly yours,

"J. G.-CRAIG."

Thoroughly cognisant as Sir James had been of the relations of Sir Walter and my father, his testimony is most valuable, and its value is increased by the fact that he generously befriended both when the crisis of 1826 had

rendered them insolvent, for he was one of those who aided my father in launching the "Miscellany," and although he refused to become a member of a committee in London for raising a monument to Sir Walter Scott, because the advertisement they had issued contained assertions which he knew to be false, and which he considered injurious to my father's memory, he was one of the most energetic promoters of a subscription in Edinburgh for a similar purpose, and it was on the motion of Sir James Gibson-Craig that the creditors of Sir Walter made him a present of all his furniture, plate, books, and curiosities, and remitted nearly £30,000 of *interest*, which might legally have been exacted.

In the year 1832, immediately after the death of Sir Walter Scott, Sir James had written in the same terms as he did to myself, but still more fully, in reply to a distinguished literary personage, whose anxiety had been painfully aroused for the reputation of Sir Walter Scott, and in that letter he declared that Sir Walter had always the manliness to acknowledge that the loss sustained by his liability for the double set of bills had originated in a desire on my father's part to do him service.[1]

[1] In a letter to William Laidlaw, dated 16th December 1825, Sir Walter writes—"The confusion of 1814 is a joke to this, . . . but it arises out of the nature of the same connexion which gives, and has given me, a fortune, and therefore I am not entitled to grumble." Referring to an offer by the Duke of Somerset and another English nobleman to advance £30,000 each, for Sir Walter Scott's immediate use, and to the grand proposal of the young Duke of Buccleuch, to take the whole loss on himself, and to pay the interest of the debt until he should come of age, William Laidlaw himself gives utterance to a suggestion for which I shall ever cordially bless his memory:—

Abundant testimony might have been cited in corroboration of this view, but there are now few living witnesses of the transactions of that distant period, and I unhappily neglected, while I might have done so, to secure a written record of the opinions of such persons as Alexander Cowan and Alexander Goodsir, who were cognisant of all. One valuable letter I possess, and shall now quote, from a personal and highly valued friend of Sir Walter Scott, who was intimately acquainted with my father from the beginning till the close of his career. The testimony of Mr. Thomson, who was the friend of both, and continued to be in daily association with Sir Walter for years after my father had passed away, is too important to be omitted here. The letter I shall give was written after Mr. Lockhart had aroused the indignation of my father's friends, and aggravated the malady under which my elder brother was suffering at the time, by the calumnies he had published with regard to him.

The kind intention of Mr. Thomson's letter was to soothe my brother's mind, and induce him to postpone a refutation, until, by collection and consideration of his evidence, he could effectually silence the traducer, and correct public judgment on the matter:—

MR. THOMAS THOMSON to DAVID CONSTABLE.

"GEORGE STREET, *Feb.* 16, 1838.

"MY DEAR CONSTABLE,—I believe you may rest assured

"Apart from all this, cannot they set up Constable again? He has likewise been a real benefactor to his country,—and then Sir Walter would of course be relieved."—*Abbotsford Notanda*, Edinburgh, 1871.

that the publication of certain passages in the sixth volume of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, in which your father was spoken of, produced on all his old friends and yours a feeling of deep displeasure and disgust. With all *your* feelings on such an occasion I can fully sympathize; and even for their excess, if any, I could make large allowance. I have thought, again and again, how such offensive and unwarrantable statements could be most effectually met, not merely for the gratification of our present feelings, but for the justification of him who can no longer come forth in his might for his own vindication. That such statements are to a certain extent *actionable slanders*, I have little doubt; but I should feel little inclination to confide the honour of a friend or a parent to the judgment or fine feelings of a Scotch jury; and, at any rate, I am afraid that the recriminative tone of your 'Letters' would be employed as a bar (not a complete one certainly) in the way of a satisfactory verdict for damages.

"To my own mind, certainly, a much more satisfactory and dignified course would be to publish a counter-statement of facts, in a firm tone, supported by such documents in your possession as would tend to show that your father was dragged on to his ruin, not by his own impetuous and speculative genius, so much as by the overbearing appetency of others for the means of meeting and sustaining an extravagant system of expenditure. I do not know how far you are provided with original and useful materials for such a purpose; but such assuredly is the line of *defensive operations*, which I consider as the most

satisfactory, most graceful and becoming. I shall be glad to hear what you think of it.

"Your letters show me that you are in full vigour of mind, and by your own account the genial air and rustic *cuisine* of Ladykirk have been well suited to your taste and constitution. I trust you will husband your resources for good and effective uses, and not waste them in unavailing and unproductive exertions. Without a *joke*, don't give way to your just and natural feelings of indignation to the injury or impediment of a more lasting and laudable vengeance.—I ever am, my dear Constable, affectionately yours, THOMAS THOMSON."

Had my brother ever felt himself sufficiently strong in mental health to undertake the task and fulfil the duty that has unhappily fallen to me, the honour of our father would not perhaps have been more completely cleared, but his case would have been eloquently stated, and that by one who, being only by twenty-one years his junior, may be said to have lived at his father's side through all the events narrated.

In the year 1838, when the first paroxysm of indignation had subsided, which Mr. Lockhart's statements had induced, and the first *Refutation* by the representatives of Mr. Ballantyne had appeared, David wrote the following letters to his brother Henry, then *en route* to China. Their tone is so temperate, and the view they give of our father's relations to Sir Walter Scott appears so true and just, that I feel I cannot more fitly conclude my sad narration than by quoting them entire:—

"LADYKIRK, TARBOLTON, *Oct.* 25, 1838.

"MY DEAR HENRY,—I have read the Refutation on the part of the Messrs. Ballantyne which you put into my hand while here. There was no occasion for the caution with which you accompanied it. This production certainly throws a very different light over that important feature of the Life of Sir Walter Scott, which arises from his connexion with the bookselling and printing concerns of Ballantyne and Co., from that which has fallen upon it from the pen of his biographer.

"Our father used often and deeply to regret that Sir Walter should ever have embarked himself in bookselling and printing transactions so extensively as he did. This sentiment I firmly believe he entertained, without any feeling of a purely selfish nature, as being a bookseller himself, or from any unreasonable personal dislike towards either of the Messrs. Ballantyne, but rather (all things considered) the reverse. He saw plainly enough that it would have been more for Sir Walter's interest as well as comfort, and for other considerations, that he should be unembarrassed by the common anxieties or even possible failure of mercantile speculation. His esteem and personal regard for Sir Walter, both as a private friend and as one of those illustrious spirits who are to shed a lustre over the land where the providence of Heaven ordained them first to see the light, always did appear to me to be indulged almost to the verge of idolatry. This admiration, or whatever you choose to call it, was carried to such an extent with regard to Sir Walter, that, had our father's fortune admitted it, I do not think that either you or my-

self, or those of his friends who knew him best, such as Mr. Thomson or Sir James Gibson-Craig, could have altogether anticipated the extent to which he would have gone in a pecuniary point of view. My own opinion is, that he would only have been limited by the certainty of his endangering his own credit to such an extent as to have ruined himself and those who were connected with him—which would have been doing Sir Walter no real service, for he was well aware that on the stability of his own fortunes those of Sir Walter depended in no ordinary degree. That this was really his view is sufficiently apparent from the correspondence in my possession relative to the measures he suggested for extricating the concern of Messrs. Ballantyne from its difficulties in the year 1813—when, by relieving that concern of its heavy stock, and by other measures which he aided and suggested for the extension of their general credit, he prevented, for that time at least, the insolvency of their establishment. There are, perhaps, some less generous natures who would or might insinuate that this also was done from interested motives; to such it may be enough to observe, that the publisher of Sir Walter had sufficient resources in his own mind to have made his way successfully in the world as a bookseller, even had he never known Sir Walter Scott.[1]

[1] "A man may have a competent head for arithmetic, and be able to calculate the results of grand and complicated transactions with a certainty attested by unvarying experience; yet if he neglect the selfish application of its rules in the careful appropriation of what we may call vulgar fractions, and is habitually willing to allow all concerned in his enterprises to participate in the success of his speculations, the men of this world are so ignorant of generous reciprocity,

"In the very important consideration how far the firm of Messrs. Constable and Co. ought to have gone, in reference to their pecuniary engagements on account of Sir Walter, there is another very essential feature to be kept in view. Sir Walter's power of imagination both as a poet and a novelist, his rapidity of composition, and the altogether unparalleled success of his writings as a favourite with the public, were elements which went beyond all the ordinary limits of commercial calculation in such matters. My father, sanguine though he was, knew that there must be limits to this faculty of the mind as well as to all power which is enclosed only for a season within the fragile clay of mortality; and it consists with my knowledge, that in the year 1823 he viewed, not by any means with alarm, but with anxiety *on Sir Walter Scott's account,* the then state of the money transactions of his house with Ballantyne and Co. It was with these views that he wrote to Sir Walter, cautioning him with regard to the extent of those pecuniary engagements in which he was involving himself, and the state both of our father's health at the time, as well as Sir Walter's own health, made his publisher

that he is not unfrequently the only one who fails at last to benefit by the result of even his most successful undertakings. Our father was certainly not an avaricious or covetous person; on the contrary, he was by nature benevolent, generous, liberal, sanguine—and his errors, if, humanly speaking, they were errors, flowed from those higher qualities of our nature. Though passionate and irritable, if any one who understood his nature had patted him gently on the shoulder and said, "Dear me, Archy, what is all this about?" or "What is the matter?" you would see the usual kind and benignant smile, which I used to delight to contemplate, return in an instant. In his family he was affectionate and kind, but always maintained his supremacy."

more than usually anxious to see the literary engagements which he had entered into with Messrs. Constable and Co. during our father's residence in England, put, if possible, on such a footing as might at least secure Sir Walter against complication of accounts, and such fluctuation in the state of credit and mercantile speculation, as might involve him in difficulties from which he might not be easily extricated.

"The correspondence to which I allude took place during the months of August and September 1823, while residing during the summer at Hatton. In a letter dated from thence, 'August 8, 1823,' which appears to have been of a private and confidential nature, and addressed by himself to Sir Walter, there is the following passage; 'On looking into the state of the dealings of my house with James Ballantyne and Co., I cannot help remarking that they might be placed on a more manageable and less expensive footing, particularly in regard to the money transactions, of the magnitude of which I have only just now become fully aware.' And accordingly it appears from other letters that arrangements had then been made in consequence of this suggestion, and in concurrence with Mr. Robert Cadell and Sir Walter Scott, for reducing these transactions, as appears from the copies of other letters, and various memoranda, during these months of August and September.

"Such a crisis in money transactions, as seemed at this time to have been provided against by the measures then adopted, did afterwards occur in the extraordinary panic of 1825; inducing not only our father's ruin, but nearly

involving the nation itself in extreme danger. From the rage for wild speculation which prevailed so extensively at this disastrous period, and which seduced many men, considered as of sober and regular habits of business, to venture out of the line of their own concerns, and speculate in the various joint-stock companies which were then formed, our father stood entirely aloof; and although I well remember he was solicited to join some of the more reasonable and solid, which held out the prospect of immediate profit, yet he declined all such proposals, and confined himself to his own business, which he certainly understood. In none of them therefore was he engaged. This proper caution did not save *him*, however, from the ruin which a wide-spreading insolvency at that time produced. But, had such a state of things not occurred, I have no hesitation in maintaining, that all the important publications in which he was engaged as the leading and responsible party, would have fulfilled the engagements which arose out of them, and have fully realized his reasonable expectation of profit and success in the end.

"In proof of this, it is only necessary to appeal to the profits which, since the year 1826, have been and are still realizing out of them—and *that* on the modes and plans as well as the minor details of publication, which were either originally conceived, practised, suggested, or intended by the original proprietor and publisher; and where these plans have not been strictly followed, it would not be difficult to show that they have only been less successful on that account; and that they would

have been greatly more productive than they have actually been, as well as more extensively useful to the public, had his views been more rigidly adhered to, both in the form and manner of publication. The Encyclopædia Britannica, edited by Professor Napier, and the writings of Sir Walter Scott alone, will sufficiently bear out these propositions, and prove, I think, that the former proprietor took no overstrained or overweening view of *these* valuable copyrights.

"I cannot instance to you his quick perception of the value and profitable improvement or cultivation (if I may use the expression) of this sort of property better than by an example. While attending my father at Clapham, at the time when he left Clermiston and had gone to England to try what change of air and scene and medical advice would do for the improvement of his health,—some discussion and correspondence with his partner had taken place, with regard to the value of the copyrights belonging to his house. It was alleged that he took a too sanguine view, which some might term overweening, of their value. It certainly did appear to me that they were greatly undervalued in the estimate which his partner seemed to have formed of their real worth. At the same time, it was possible that my father might have formed too sanguine views, and overvalued them. I stated my thoughts to him to that effect. 'Why, sir,' said he, 'I will show you how as much money may be made out of *one* transaction, with regard to Scott's poetry and the novels and tales, as the *entire copyright* of these works is valued at in Mr. Cadell's estimate;' and accordingly he

did so. His estimates of the expense of paper and printing, and plans as to the size, form, and manner of publication, were communicated to Mr. Robinson, of the firm of Hurst, Robinson, and Co., and in a few days the contract signed, and the transaction concluded. The bills were sent down to Edinburgh before my father left Clapham, and must have realized gradually, in the course of three years, a profit in cash (leaving the copyright *entire*) of upwards of £10,000 to the concern. After this I was certainly inclined, as you may suppose, rather to rely with still more implicit confidence on our father's opinion on such matters, than on those of others who might be more cautious, but were certainly less skilful, in estimating their true value.

"That our father's life was a career of unwearied industry and exertion in the vocation which was allotted to him, and in its progress and general results more beneficial to those who were connected with him in literary undertakings or business transactions, or to those among whom he lived, than productive of advantage to himself or to his family, there cannot be a doubt. It was not perhaps to be expected that the capitalists of London or Edinburgh should be as skilful in their knowledge of the value of literary property as they are in ordinary or less delicate securities. There are not many persons who understand the nature or the value of that species of incorporeal or intellectual wealth which is called *copyright*. It is not every bookseller who knows how to manage it to the best advantage; and when very valuable property of this kind comes to be sold, the persons are not very numerous who

are likely to compete in the acquisition. Time, also, is required, and even a considerable tract of future years, to gain a profitable return of the money which may have been expended or ventured in acquiring it. But had the bankers of London understood the value of an assignment of copyright by an author to his publisher, and of *such* copyrights as those of the writings of the Author of Waverley or the Encyclopædia Britannica, as well as they understand the value of a bill of lading of a cargo of hides or tallow from St. Petersburg, I feel perfectly assured that no loss would have been sustained in any quarter, so far as literature and the publications of Constable and Co. were concerned; and the ultimate result of our father's fortune and our own would have been very different from what it was and is. Money would have been advanced in the hour of need, and the engagements of all concerned fulfilled. The individuals who were interested or connected together in these affairs would *then* most probably have acted with manly firmness and entire confidence in each other (as our father suggested), and success instead of ruin would still have been the result.

"On the other hand, conceive to yourself a valuable accumulation of property in copyright, the fruit of thirty years of incessant and active exertion. Keep in view also the liberal outlay of capital during the same period, commensurate to the quantity of the property acquired—an outlay which had raised the price of literary labour (that delicate and unsubstantial species of property which is the growth of mind and not of matter) not merely in Scotland but in Britain, and had rendered the existence

of many a sensitive labourer in the often unthankful and unrewarded field of letters less irksome and precarious to himself, as well as more useful to his country and his kind. Consider, I say, a mass of property of this nature, tossed into the market and disposed of during a period of utter discomfiture and depression, and you will then be able to form a faint idea of the wreck in which our parent was involved.

"As to the causes which produced the failure of Messrs. Hurst, Robinson, and Co., the London agents of Constable and Co., I do not pretend to be fully informed, but I have understood that they had been speculating in hops, out of the proper line of their business. There can be no doubt, however, that in the case of our dear parent a life of the most meritorious exertion in that department of commercial enterprise to which he was particularly devoted, was sacrificed (without any particular error of his own) to that spirit of gambling, which, like some evil genius, had gone forth into the world of capital at that time, by which he was one of the most remarkable sufferers, and, according to all the generally received notions of worldly wisdom, least of all deserved to become the victim.

"I have thus put you in possession of a few of my thoughts on this subject. They are general views, but they will be found to be correct; and I believe it may be said of them, as Dr. Samuel Johnson said of the abstract of his Dictionary, 'Of an abstract it is not necessary to say more; and I hope it will not be found that truth requires me to say less.'

"You would receive my letter of yesterday as to other matters. I trust this will reach you in London before your departure for the land of Egypt. Pray don't forget my commission at Alexandria. Write to me as often as you like.—And believe me, etc.

"DAVID CONSTABLE."

DAVID CONSTABLE to HENRY CONSTABLE.

"LADYKIRK, TARBOLTON, *Jan.* 14, 1840.

"MY DEAR BROTHER,—I was glad to find that you had received my letter about our father's affairs and Sir Walter Scott safely. It must have been an unexpected piece of correspondence for you to receive in Egypt. I had expected that it might just reach you before leaving London, or, at all events, soon after your arrival in the East. The correspondence with Scott in August 1823 is more than a sufficient answer to Lockhart's impertinence, so far as our father is concerned. I remember, moreover, in the course of the same year, after he had returned from Hatton and was at Park Place unwell, his then still complaining of the state of the transactions with Ballantyne and Co. on account of Scott, and expressing fears that Sir Walter would involve himself too deeply in paper accommodations. He complained also that he could not get satisfactory statements as to the real state of Sir Walter's and the Ballantynes' account with Messrs. A. C. and Co.

"You are aware our father had been some time in England, and his health was by no means re-established, although considerably improved by his residence in the

south. In the event of his death, he was particularly anxious that Sir Walter should be as little embarrassed as possible, and more than once had expressed his wishes to that effect to me; and that these matters should be put on an intelligible and clear footing. Sometimes he would say, Why did I not assist him? My answer was, Show me how I can assist you, and it shall be done. After considering the matter with all the means of information which I could bring to it, I thought the best thing that could be advised was to have an able accountant introduced into the knowledge of the whole business transactions of A. C. and Co., and to have a balance struck, that we might know the whole length, width, breadth, and depth of the matter. Accordingly, I waited on Mr. Cadell, and proposed that, seeing our father was by no means satisfied with the statements of Ballantyne's account, which had been rendered to him since his return to Edinburgh, it would be the most satisfactory mode of proceeding, both for Mr. Cadell as well as our father and all concerned, that Mr. Adam Thomson, accountant (who had lately drawn up a view of the printing concern for me), or any other confidential person,—a regular accountant however, should be introduced into the knowledge of the whole transactions, and produce a balance-sheet which any man of business might be able to understand. It was not without considerable difficulty that I got Mr. Cadell to agree to this. After more than one conversation on the subject, and several notes which passed between us, he however agreed to the proposal of the accountant, on the understanding that the pro-

ceeding was to be held strictly private and confidential, which to this hour in which I write it has been, so far as I was concerned, with the exception, of course, of such persons as were necessarily to be advised with. It was agreed in the above-mentioned arrangement with Mr. Cadell that the accountant should carry on his examination in the premises of A. C. and Co., No. 1 Princes Street, and the books of the concern were accordingly submitted to Mr. Thomson's investigation, who entered on the preparation of such a statement as that which I have mentioned, and commenced checking the different leading accounts of the concern. I called more than once on Mr. Thomson to learn how the statement was proceeding, and found after the lapse of several weeks that he had got as far as the cash-account, but that there some delay or check to his labours had taken place. I afterwards learned that Sir Walter Scott, on hearing that Mr. Adam Thomson was engaged on the above statement, had called on our father at Park Place, and had objected to his dealings with the house of A. C. and Co. being submitted to an accountant, and in fact had insisted that the investigation should proceed no farther. Who told Sir Walter that such a statement was in progress I know not; he did not get the information from me; and certainly had our father advised with me before giving up his own view to Sir Walter in a matter of so much importance, I should have been the last person to have advised against my own advice. . . . Such a statement as that of Mr. Adam Thomson would have gone far to have emancipated Sir Walter Scott and set him free. At all events, there would *then* have

been no room for mystification in any quarter. When I perceived, therefore, that Sir Walter Scott's influence had been used to prevent the effectual attainment of this object, my disgust was not the less intense because confined to my own breast; the fear of injuring the credit of the concern, and a desire to avoid whatever might be injurious to the interest of Sir Walter, made me remain *passive* when it would have been better for all concerned that I had persevered, or rather have urged our father to persevere, in the matter of the accountant. So much for these matters at present. . . . DAVID CONSTABLE."

Acquitting all concerned of any intention to defraud the public, or to take undue advantage of each other, and admitting that had Mr. Robinson refrained from extraneous speculation, his Scottish correspondents were apparently in the way to emancipation when the crisis came, it cannot be denied that they were all alike culpable, in having united to maintain a system of fictitious credit.

The authoress of *Mystifications* tells us of a certain noble lady whose experience had taught her that the most effective method for getting rid of a temptation is to yield to it; and an old nursery rhyme, known probably to all my readers, insists so pertinaciously in presenting itself to my imagination, as bearing a striking analogy to the circumstances and results of this sad story, that like the Lady Christian I shall yield to temptation and quote it here.

The legend tells of a criminal association, and attributes

without hesitation to each individual of the society the nature and extent of his complicity, thus :—

> "This is the man that broke the barn,
> This is the man that stole the corn,
> This is the man that ran awa',
> This is the man that stood and saw,—and
> This is the man that paid for a'."

I shall not venture to individualize or apportion with reference to the first four, and it is I believe unnecessary that I affix a relative personality to the fifth, whom Mr. Lockhart has represented as morally responsible for the disaster in which all were alike involved.

Seriously crippled though Archibald Constable and Company had been by the secession of Mr. Hunter and the death of Mr. Cathcart, there is no reason to doubt, that had the partners acted upon the prudent counsels of Mr. Gilchrist, and their steady friend Mr. Gibson, although they might have failed to secure the brilliant patronage of Sir Walter Scott, they would have kept their place in the front rank of their profession, and the fortune of at least one of the partners might have been very different at the close of life.

In like manner, Mr. James Ballantyne, who was without a doubt the best printer of his day, might—but for the entanglements in which the friendship of Sir Walter Scott involved him—have found his way to wealth as well as fame; and Sir Walter himself, had he been content to let his acres wait upon his fortune, and left the cares and risks of trade to others,—although the world might have been the poorer for wanting the grand lesson

his last years afforded, of honourable devotion to what he conceived his highest duty,—would have been far happier and more prosperous, and need never have penned the following sad entry in his diary :—

April 15th, 1828.—"It is written that nothing shall flourish under my shadow : the Ballántynes, Terry, Nelson, Weber, all came to distress. Nature has written on my brow, Your shade shall be broad, but there shall be no protection derived from it to aught you favour."

APPENDIX No. I.

Of the regard entertained for my father, and the high estimation in which he was held as a public benefactor, abundant evidence is afforded by the reception given by the newspapers of the day to the intelligence of the misfortunes that befell him in January 1826, and of his death on July 21, 1827. The extracts which follow are from Notices that appeared at the time in the public journals.

On the Crisis of 1825-26.

"The *Morning Herald* of yesterday states—'The book trade was never known to be in so depressed a state as at the present time. The Bank of England has refused for the last three weeks to discount any bookseller's bill. Nothing can be more confirmatory of the falling off in the bookselling business than the fact of the two principal booksellers, Constable and Murray, having become Number publishers.'

"A more unfounded and more mischievous statement than the above never found its way into a newspaper. We can state of our own knowledge, that the booksellers have experienced no such refusal from the Bank of England, and that their bills to a large amount have been discounted by that body *every Wednesday* during the last twelve months. That the Bank should single out so respectable a body as the booksellers of this metropolis for proscription, would indeed suppose that corporation possessed of a degree of stupidity and malignity altogether unexampled in the annals of commerce. We need hardly observe, that the property invested in the book trade is immense, and that many of the booksellers are possessed of very large capitals indeed. Many single booksellers own stocks to the value of £50,000, £100,000, etc. But when we come to partnerships, what immense stocks are owned by the houses of Longman, Whittaker, Baldwin, Hurst, Cadell, Sherwood, Rivington, Lackington, Butterworth, Clarke, etc. etc. On the book trade of London, an immense number of families employed in the different stages, from the manufacture of paper to the

printing, to say nothing of authors, are dependent for subsistence, and any injury to the credit of the booksellers would be one of the greatest calamities that ever befell the country. That an individual or a house may in this, as well as in all other branches of commerce, occasionally over-trade, we all know, but that the whole body should be found over-trading would indeed be a miracle. Of all trades, too, the book trade is that least liable to fluctuation, depending almost entirely on home consumption. We will answer for it, that there is no branch of trade in the country in which the demand is so uniform, and, consequently, where the inducements to over-trade are so few.

"With respect to the particular individuals aimed at, Mr. Murray and Mr. Constable, we can only say that we do not see how, at a time when an immense craving has been manifested by the great body of the people for books of a better description than that which they have hitherto had, and that a speculation in the supply for this new demand promises to be attended with profit, a bookseller should hesitate to embark his capital in it any more than in any other mode of publication. The supply of the body of the people with books enters more and more every year into the calculations of booksellers. In fact, the demand of the body of the people has given quite a new complexion to the trade of late years. Formerly, a book which did not sell, in a year or two went, as a matter of course, to the trunk-maker. Now, the remainder of an edition, after a certain time, is disposed of at trade-sales, to a numerous class of booksellers on a small scale, through whom it is distributed through every part of the metropolis and the country, for the convenience of purchasers in humble life. This trade has sprung up within our own remembrance of the metropolis. We have no doubt that Mr. Constable will be amply remunerated for his spirited attempt to enlist men of the first genius and talents to write for the improvement of the great body of the people—an attempt for which he deserves the thanks of every one who has the welfare of the people at heart. This project of Mr. Constable's was, we know, planned long before the present commercial embarrassments. If Mr. Murray has embarked in a similar attempt, we have no doubt he has equally good reasons for it, but the information is new to us. Some of the first publications of the country have been issued in numbers.

"This much we have deemed it but justice to say in behalf of a class of so much importance to the country, and so respectable in itself. At a season of alarm like the present, such a paragraph may, if not instantly contradicted, do much mischief."—*The Morning Chronicle*, *Nov.* 30, 1825.

"THE BOOKSELLERS.

"'A heavy wit shall hang at every lord:'
So sung Dan Pope; but 'pon my word,
He was a story-teller,
Or else the times have altered quite,
For wits, or heavy now, or light,
Hang each by a bookseller.'

S. T. C.

"Of all the revolutions that have taken place in modern times—or it should perhaps rather be said of all the improvements which the increasing spirit and refining taste of those times have brought about, the greatest in its nature, and the most beneficial in its influence, is that which has taken place in the world of letters—which has removed entirely that incompetent and lumbering class of middle-men—patrons—which has elevated the bookseller into the character of the common agent of the instructors and the instructed—and thereby placed the literature of England even higher in the intellectual scale than the liberality of her institutions, and the consequent vigour of her people, place her in the political one.

"Scarcely a century has elapsed since the portals of fame to men of genius, and the portals of knowledge and intellectual entertainment to all the people, were kept by the Cerberi of the aristocracy. In those days neither the authors nor the publishers of books were freemen; they were serfs depending upon the pleasure of haughty peers and saucy courtiers; and, although one of the former happened to possess wisdom that could instruct, or genius that could delight the age, he had not even a chance of being permitted to impart knowledge or inspire delight, unless he in the first place condescended to stand cap in hand until some lordling pleased to cease from caressing his favourite dog, or until some minion of the court had bound him to sink and stain himself in the black flood of political intrigue;—and even when he did obtain a hearing, he was fain (or rather let us hope forced) to set a Cain's mark of his own degradation on the forehead of his book—to plant talents and virtues in a region which, in respect of these, Heaven had cursed with eternal barrenness. When, indeed, we collect some half-dozen of even classical books—books by men of sterling talent, and look at the prodigiously great and good men to whom these are dedicated; and then turn to the memorials of their times, which the impartial judge has seen meet to spare, without finding so much as a single trace of all this wisdom and all this worth, we are apt to imagine that of all perishable things the talents and the virtues of official and titled persons are the most perishable; for really, if it

were not for the very sin of the authors in having lied their patrons into remembrance, there would not be one indication of the breed in the world's annals.

"What a change has now taken place! A literary man of the present day would as soon think of seeking patronage from the Emperor of Austria, or setting forth the talents and the virtues of the Spanish Ferdinand, as of placing his hopes of a hearing with the public upon the foremost nobleman in the land; and as for courtiers, a recommendation of the most noble Hertford or his Grace of the Brazen Achilles, would be no better passport in the Row than a certificate from Aldgate Pump. The public—those fifteen millions of people 'within the four seas' of our 'snug little island,' the far greater majority of whom, above the years of mere infancy, not only can read but do read, are the patrons of genius and of learning; and every school that is founded, no matter by whom,—every literary or scientific institution that is established, no matter under what appellation,—is another pledge and another security, not only that the information, and through that all the active energies of this country shall not languish and decline, but that they are flourishing and will flourish, with a vigour of which the boldest imagination cannot even now picture the extent. Under such a patronage—so general, that it cannot be affected by caprice,—so powerful, that it cannot be destroyed either by accident or by design,—and so liberal, that its rewards must always be in the full measure, proportioned to that which is offered to it—every talent that can either discover new utility, or invent new amusement, or which can so vary the old as to give them somewhat of the charm of novelty, is sure to meet with its full and honest recompence.

"This change has brought the publishers of books into an attitude of the greatest importance and honour;—it has made them the connecting link between the people of England and that which has made, is making, and shall continue to make, the people of England superior to the people of every land where intellect has not the same unbounded scope. The result has been that, as in all similar cases, the men have risen both in character and in affluence, as their status and importance in society have been raised. When they lived huddled together in their small shops, and waited the sanction of this or the other patron, before they dared venture to publish, they were men of narrow and illiberal views, and, in point of opulence, far down in the scale of metropolitan citizens; but they and those to whom they give employment have now risen to the very top; and taking the Court of Alder-

men as a test of civic wealth and local respectability, there are more of its members connected with the book-trade than with any other three trades in the capital. Perhaps also the quantity of labour which they employ is greater, and in many branches of it more intellectual and ingenious, than that which is employed in any other branch of industry. There is none in which the manufactured article is so valuable, even in a merely mercantile point of view, as compared with the raw material from which it is made; and though the taxes are certainly not the most liberal or judicious on the statute-book, there are few branches of industry which produce a greater revenue to the state. Let any one imagine how many paper-makers, typefounders, engine-makers, printers, bookbinders, shopkeepers, and agents, the millions of works (for taking them in all their variety, there are millions) which are annually published in England must employ,—to all of which the bookseller is really the moving power—the grand engine that puts the whole in motion; and then their great value in a political point of view may be guessed at. When to this are added their intellectual and moral influence, the talents which they create (for without them those talents would lie dormant, and therefore be of no more use than if they did not exist), it is certainly not saying too much to describe them as at once the most important and the most generally influential profession in the whole kingdom.

"It is true that the booksellers of the present day have, not in one instance, but in hundreds of instances, become rich beyond all former precedent; but their riches have not, like the riches of mere speculators, been obtained by a transfer of those of others,—nor have they, like the comparatively small possessions of the elder bibliopoles, been ground out of an oppressed and degraded literati: they have become rich, because they have opened the mines of intellect to the people; and just as they have been liberal to those who have supplied them with materials, the public has been liberal to them—or perhaps, one should say, just to itself.

"Constable of Edinburgh was perhaps the first who saw clearly the advantages of this liberality; Murray soon followed; nor was it long ere, with a very few exceptions, the whole trade adopted the same system,—so that now, unless it be from those who have mistaken their man or their occupation, we hear nothing of the illiberality of booksellers. No doubt they are still cautious with strangers; but this caution, instead of an injury to the public, is a service; inasmuch as the bookseller, by incurring the whole of his expense before he is certain of realizing a single shilling, plays a game which is more hazardous

than that of an ordinary merchant, whose goods, however injudiciously he may buy them, are always sure to fetch a certain portion of the price.

"Another proof of the liberality and discernment of the booksellers is the readiness with which they adapt the form and mode of publishing their books to the spirit of the times. Since the reading public became the world generally, and not the merely professional students, a new literature has been demanded, and it has been demanded in a new form. Men, whose occupations are connected with the passing time, have become the majority of readers, and they accordingly desire that the reading shall also not only be connected with the passing time, but shall come in portions as that time passes. Hence the great demand for periodical literature; and hence, too, the breaking down of larger works into numbers, so that they may be published periodically.

"This, which began with obscurer publishers, and with works of a less important nature, is extending itself over the whole trade, and over the whole empire of letters, in such a way as proves that reading is becoming universal both as to the readers and the subjects read."—*News of Literature, Dec.* 10, 1825.

"CONSTABLE'S MISCELLANY."

"The name of Constable has strong claims to respect from those who feel an interest in the literary honours of Scotland. To hundreds it has been the passport to fame, to consequence, and to emolument; and it is indeed associated with almost every work of genius which has appeared in the last and brightest period of our literary history. It would be ungrateful in the Press and the Public to forget this; and we can truly say, therefore, that it gives us sincere pleasure to see that name reappear, after an interval of gloom and misfortune, in connexion with a work of undisputed utility. This First Volume of the Miscellany is now ready, and we hope will meet with the encouragement which it amply merits. It is a reprint of Captain Hall's very interesting Voyage to Loo-Choo, with various additions, and, among others, an account of his interview with Bonaparte in 1817. This small volume, neatly printed, enables the reader to obtain, for three shillings, what would cost in another shape twelve or fourteen. The plan of progressive publication in weekly numbers puts it within the reach of all but the very poorest classes, while the style of its typography, and its general appearance, render it not unworthy of a place in the libraries

of the opulent.—When the work was projected, more than twelve months ago, we anticipated that it would become highly popular, and be in fact the parent of a race of publications which would give a new impulse to the diffusion of knowledge. We were not mistaken, for, previous to the melancholy revulsion in trade which plunged so many persons in distress, and suspended the publication at the moment when it was on the eve of starting, it had obtained the unprecedented number of fourteen thousand subscribers! The subject is one upon which we could easily enlarge: but as we could probably say nothing better than we have said already, we shall close this notice with an extract from an article which we published on the 14th December 1825.

"To estimate what may be the effect of this class of works, let us look to the recent changes in our literature. There are two species of publications which have given a new impulse to thought, and prodigiously accelerated the progress of knowledge within the last sixty years —we mean Encyclopædias and Reviews which deal in discussion. Both of these owe some portion of their usefulness to a circumstance common to all periodicals—that, coming out in parts, they neither press heavily on the time nor the purse, and are thus within the reach of multitudes in the middle and lower walks of society. The former made scientific knowledge and general information more widely accessible; the latter familiarized the people with the principles of philosophy, and taught them to take comprehensive views of passing events and of their own situation. But both from their nature are subject to restrictions. The one can take in no article which exceeds 30 or 40 octavo pages, and excludes some species of reading altogether; the other, being compelled by its plan to embrace many subjects which nobody cares for, can assign but a small space to others which are far more attractive. A Life of Washington or Nelson in two volumes, a History of India in three volumes, a Narrative of Hall's Voyages of a similar size, could find admission into neither. Yet many readers will deem these as interesting and profitable as anything in the pages of a Review, and for ninety-nine in a hundred they are infinitely more attractive than a long treatise on Botany, Mineralogy, or the Genus *Mammalia*. An Encyclopædia is a work three-fourths of which are *necessarily* useless to its possessor; but in a Miscellany, fettered by no system in the compiling, nine parts in ten will have a value to every reader. Of our modern Magazines, filled up with *flash* and flummery, it is needless to speak. They sparkle like champagne at the moment of decanting, but are so stale and vapid one month after they issue from the press, that no man out of his dotage ever opens them a second time. An

Encyclopædia in 20 volumes costs forty pounds: and, for the same sum, those who subscribe for a Miscellany of this kind, will have a library of 266 volumes, in every one of which an ordinary reader will find instruction or rational amusement. In short, the great merit of this project is, that the principle of progressive and periodical publication, which has so many advantages, but has hitherto been applied only to a few old standard books, to ephemeral discussions, and summaries of science, is rendered applicable to the great floating mass of our literature, and thus furnishes a prodigious engine for the diffusion of every species of useful and ornamental knowledge through the lower and middle classes of society. We anticipate one farther, and, in our opinion, very great advantage, from the establishment of such publications. Generally speaking, at present, books are esteemed by all persons in the middle and lower ranks, as something of the nature of luxuries or superfluities. They are something which it is very convenient and pleasant to have, but which can quite well be wanted. Casual circumstances make an individual lay out half a guinea or a guinea, at a rare juncture, upon some volume which strikes his fancy; but no man (a professed collector excepted) sets apart a portion of his income to buy books, as he does to buy food, clothes, or furniture. Now, it occurs to us that when three or four of the great publishing Booksellers have commenced their Miscellanies, and have thus broken down the mass of our mental aliment (as chandlers do our corporeal food) into portions for daily and weekly consumption, literature will take its rank among the *necessaries of life*, and a library will be considered —as it ought to be by every man in decent circumstances—an indispensable part of household furniture. Few persons would want a collection of books, if one adapted to their tastes and habits could be procured by laying out a shilling weekly. But we hesitate when £2, 12s. are to be expended in buying only two quartos or four octavos —first, because so large a sum as 13s. or 26s. can ill be spared at once; secondly, because, when books are at such a price, we despair of forming a useful collection; and, thirdly, that as we cannot get what we would wish, we find few single volumes so tempting as to break through our habit, and put our hands in our pockets. But things will be greatly changed when the 52s. which buys only four volumes at present, perhaps on one single subject, will buy seventeen volumes of equal size as to reading, and embracing a great variety of instructive or interesting matter. In a few years, we predict that every young man, when his apprenticeship is done, will lay aside a shilling weekly for books—that a young couple taking up house will reckon

thirty or forty volumes of Constable's Miscellany as indispensable as a chest of drawers, or an eight-day clock—and that the question 'Who is your Bookseller?' will be as pertinent in every decent family as 'Who is your grocer' or 'clothier?'"—*Scotsman of January* 6, 1827.

"On Thursday last, the 19th curt., the old, extensive, and respectable house of Messrs. A. Constable and Co. suspended payment—an event so wholly unexpected that it is difficult to say whether regret or surprise most predominated at its announcement. For more than thirty years Mr. Constable has been at the head of the bookselling interest in Scotland; and, without even excepting the London bibliopoles, where, we ask, is the individual who, within that time, has published so many standard works? The Waverley Novels—the Poems and Miscellaneous Writings of Sir Walter Scott—the Works of Stewart, Playfair, Leslie, and Brown—the Supplement to the Edinburgh Encyclopædia—Edinburgh Review, Annual Register, Gazetteer, and a hundred other books of approved excellence, have all borne the imprint already alluded to; and not a few of our English authors, attracted by the fame of Mr. Constable, have been glad to avail themselves of his services to introduce their works to public notice. Twenty-five years have nearly elapsed since the first number of the Edinburgh Review appeared, and at that time more than one bookseller was deterred from affixing his name to a publication which, however full of literary promise, aspired from the first to a character of sturdy independence. Mr. Constable, however, calculated better, and the event fully justified his expectations. Not many years ago 14,000 copies of this publication were printed and sold four times in the year; and, for aught we know to the contrary, the same number may be circulated still. The property of such a popular work must have yielded a very handsome income, even when shared by the gifted editor and his able coadjutors; and we believe we do not exaggerate when we say that, with one exception, the Edinburgh Review has put more money into the pockets of eminent literary men than all the periodicals of the present age. Though the organ of a party, and sometimes unnecessarily keen and rancorous in discussion, its merits far outweigh its defects; and the fine philosophy, critical acumen, and strong, straightforward, manly sense, by which it has ever been characterized, have had no slight influence upon the opinions, feelings, and even the fortunes of the British people. Had Mr. Constable published nothing else, his name would have been advantageously

known to the public; but with so many other claims to attention, that man must be devoid of every generous emotion who does not sympathize in his present misfortunes. Time would fail us were we to enumerate all the friendless authors he has from time to time taken by the hand, and whose works have been launched into the world under the most favourable auspices, even when the prospect of profit was distant or doubtful. During the last twenty years the most eminent men in Great Britain have frequented his shop, and sat at his table; and were the business history of Mr. Constable written with something like the minuteness of the Life of Dr. Johnson, it would be very difficult to conceive a book that would be either more instructive or amusing. The *Scotsman*, we are glad to perceive, hints that the embarrassments of A. Constable and Co. will only be of a temporary nature; and rumour adds that the house has been brought into its present situation by the failure of a great company in London. Most happy shall we be to find the former supposition correct; the reading and the writing public can ill afford to lose the services of such a man, and nothing would give us more pleasure than to see him again placed at the head of the literature of our country."—*Dumfries Courier.*

"We are concerned to learn that Mr. Constable, our late eminent Publisher, who had for some time suffered severely under a dropsical complaint, expired suddenly, at his house in Park Place, on the afternoon of Saturday. This event has, we confess, excited in our minds a train of melancholy recollections and regrets; and we cannot refrain from thus publicly expressing our respect for the memory of a man who, notwithstanding the disastrous termination of his professional career, must long be remembered as a liberal friend of literary merit, and active promoter of those literary enterprises which, during the last twenty-five years, have redounded so much to the advantage and fame of this city. We do not scruple to say, that we have nationality enough to have derived a lively satisfaction from seeing it become an object of desire among the *literati* of the south to contribute to its literary undertakings, and to resort to it as an advantageous mart of publication; and, convinced as we are, that this was in no small degree owing to the liberal views, the professional talents, activity, and address of Mr. Constable—convinced, moreover, that the opinion of the public of this place is, in this respect, in unison with our own, we feel assured, that in offering to his memory this mournful tribute of our private regard and respect, we at the same time give utterance to feelings strongly felt by the community at large. It is now somewhat

more than thirty years since Mr. Constable began to attract the notice of the learned of this city by his knowledge of rare books, particularly of those connected with the early literature of Scotland; and, several years before his name became known to the world as a considerable publisher, he had succeeded, as well by the amenity of his manners as by his professional intelligence and activity, in rendering his shop the favourite resort of all the more curious and aspiring spirits of the place. His views, however, were never limited to the collection of literary rarities, or to a merchandise confined to the existing materials of literature. He had always longed to become instrumental in adding something of importance to the stock of knowledge, and to enrol his name in the list of the more liberal and enterprising publishers of the day. Edinburgh fortunately possessed the means of gratifying this laudable ambition; and he as fortunately appeared at a period when, without such a man, her native genius might have been hampered in its flights, or damped and circumscribed in the ardour and range of its aspiring exertions. His fame as a publisher commenced with the appearance of the Edinburgh Review, which he had the honour of ushering into the world; and he long ministered to its success and its glory by a deportment towards its conductors and authors as discreet and respectful as it was manly and liberal. Some years after the first appearance of this celebrated Journal, he became the proprietor of another national work—the Encyclopædia Britannica, for which he paid a price that excited the surprise of some of the more timid of his brethren, but which was amply warranted by measures and results which his superior intelligence and sagacity had enabled him to plan and foresee. When that important work became the property of his House, the printing of its fifth edition was too far advanced to admit of any material improvements; but Mr. Constable saw very clearly that these were largely required in order to place it on a level with the knowledge, the wants, and the spirit of the age; and hence he devised the project of that Supplement which has added so much to the value and celebrity of the work to which it was appended, and to the public stock of useful knowledge and varied learning. Many doubts as to the expediency of a supplemental publication upon so extensive a scale, were, we believe, expressed by those who pretended to experience and skill in such undertakings; but Mr. Constable's anticipations were fully realized by the signal success of this favourite design; and we have always understood, that those highly liberal arrangements by which he endeavoured to provide for its usefulness and reputation, and without which the success attending it never

could have been achieved, were entirely the result of his own suggestions and the dictation of his own understanding. During the progress of these works, his house was still further aggrandized by the publication of the writings of Mr. Dugald Stewart and Sir Walter Scott;—the one bearing the most illustrious name in the serious, as the other does in the lighter branches of our national literature. His intercourse with the latter was much more intimate, varied, and extensive, and in many respects more remarkable, than was ever before exemplified between author and publisher. The publication, first of the highly popular Poems, and latterly of the still more popular Novels of that extraordinary genius, raised his house to the acme of its fame; and contributed still more largely, perhaps, than any other of the connexions that have been mentioned, to that celebrity as a publishing establishment which it so long enjoyed. The author of Waverley has himself borne honourable testimony, in the introduction to one of his novels, to Mr. Constable's merits; and we are satisfied, that what he thus proclaimed in the prolegomena of a work of fiction, he would repeat, if the opportunity shall occur, with perfect sincerity, and perhaps greater force, in a work of truth. How it happened, that with all the splendid success, so beneficial and honourable to our literature, which attended Mr. Constable's undertakings, his publishing career should have closed so disastrously, we are not very able, nor much disposed at present, to inquire. We firmly believe that he proceeded onwards to that close, void of any apprehension of such an issue, and wholly unconscious of its near approach. He had just completed the plan of the Miscellany which bears his name, and was busied, seemingly, with well-founded hopes, in sanguine calculations of the returns which it would bring to his house. Its publication did not take place till after the failure of that establishment; and we are happy to think that its subsequent success furnished some solace for his misfortunes, as well as some alleviation of his bodily sufferings; his final undertaking thus proving to be his last and only means of support. We are not writing a full or elaborate character, and do not therefore feel ourselves called upon to point out all the features of Mr. Constable's mind and conduct. We have only detailed a few particulars, calculated to justify the sentiments of grateful respect which we entertain for his memory, as by far the most eminent publisher that Scotland ever produced. In that line we certainly do not expect soon again to see a man joining such professional abilities to such liberal and extensive views; so capable of appreciating literary merit, and so anxious to find for it employment and reward; so largely endowed with the

discernment, tact, and manners necessary to maintain a useful, honourable, and harmonious intercourse with literary men."—*Caledonian Mercury, July* 23, 1827.

"With much regret we have to announce the death of Archibald Constable. . . . Few men in modern times, in any department of business, have occupied a larger space in the public eye. The extensiveness and bold originality of his speculations as a publisher would have conferred a distinction upon any man; but when these qualities are viewed in connexion with his liberality to authors—a liberality which was unprecedented—which to the cautious might appear profusion, but, as experience proved, was a proof of his sagacity, it may be safely pronounced that, in every respect, he was the most eminent publisher of his day. Shakespeare makes one of his characters speak of a 'royal merchant;' and considering the vastness, splendour, and utility of Mr. Constable's undertakings, the term *royalty*, in Shakespeare's sense, may safely be applied to him. Though his business was but that of a handmaid to literature, he may in some measure be said to have been the author of much literature, by often pointing out untrodden paths to genius, which otherwise might have escaped its searching eye; by calling into action, by means of his liberality, genius which otherwise would for ever have slumbered; and by the ready patronage which he extended to the productions of genius, the excellencies of which he could discover, but which were concealed by fastidiousness or ignorance from the grosser vision of some of his brethren. Indeed, the most remarkable trait of his professional character seems to have been, that, without being profoundly learned, he possessed an intuitive taste and perception of whatever was excellent, rare, and likely to be popular in literature—a taste and perception which never deceived him. Nothing worthless—nothing which had not some high and peculiar merit, if we make a very few exceptions, ever issued from his house; and such was the celebrity he had acquired by the almost uniform excellence of his publications, that his name on the title-page of a work was an almost certain passport to popularity. Many have published more works, numerically speaking, than Mr. Constable, but none has published nearly so much in sterling value; his shop was as the centre of attraction to most of the master spirits of the age, however diversified their politics or pursuits might have been; and hence a vast proportion, indeed, of all that is not perishable in the literature of his day was ushered into the world by him. Mr. Constable, in fact, with less learning than his predecessor Mr. Creech, but being a

better appreciator of genius and talent, had the high merit of having been the first in his profession to give a great impulse—'a local habitation and a name'—to the literature of his own country, and of making Edinburgh a 'mart of publication,' as the *Mercury* has well expressed it, to the whole of the empire. Among the most conspicuous of his publications, and those which will be ever remembered as forming eras in the history of letters, were the Edinburgh Review and the Waverley Novels. The Encyclopædia Britannica was a stupendous undertaking; but, perhaps, the work dearest to the man of philosophy and science, of the whole of his publications, was the Supplement to that Encyclopædia, the conception of which exhibits another very prominent trait in his character. Much in his speculations that appeared rash and eccentric to others was in truth the result of the calculations of an original and vigorous mind—calculations too profound to be easily fathomed by the mere tradesman; and such precisely was his undertaking of the Supplement—a work which was despaired of by many, but which, notwithstanding, was eminently successful. The latter days of Mr. Constable were clouded by dire adversity. The hurricane of 1825, which tore up by the roots the tallest trees in the commercial forest, and did not spare even the brushwood, laid him, 'the loftiest of the lofty,' prostrate. The tremendous crash of his downfall, when in his 'most high and palmy state,' is still fresh in the memory of every one. But though the branches and trunk were destroyed, the root continued sound as ever; and, with preternatural vigour, put forth *stoles* which promised to repair the damage done by the blast. His Miscellany was a wonderfully grand scheme, which delighted the patriot and philanthropist, and was, in every way, promising. With regard to Mr. Constable's *morale*, it occurs to us, that to have acquired, as he did, the esteem of the most knowing and able men of his day, he must have possessed extraordinary powers of mind, a gentlemanly spirit, and a social disposition. But rather than trust to ourselves on that subject, we would refer to the delineations by others, whose opportunities of knowing, and accurately judging, cannot be questioned. The following sketch of his character appeared in the preface to the novel of the Fortunes of Nigel, whose author is the most distinguished that can be named as a practical philosopher:—'To this great deprivation has been added, I trust for a time only, the loss of another bibliopolical friend, whose vigorous intellect, and liberal ideas, have not only rendered his native country the mart of her own literature, but established there a Court of Letters, which must command respect, even from those most inclined to dissent from

many of its canons. The effect of these changes, operated in a great measure by the strong sense and sagacious calculations of an individual, who knew how to avail himself, to an unhoped-for extent, of the various kinds of talent which his country produced, will probably appear more clearly to the generation which shall follow the present.' We have been informed that Mr. Constable had been some time engaged in preparing, at such intervals as he could command, a memoir of his life, embracing, of course, that vast fund of literary information and anecdote, which his long association with its highest and best sources must have led him to obtain, and too valuable to sink with himself into the grave. We fear, however, that misfortune and ill-health must have stopped the progress of the undertaking; but it may still be hoped that there are materials for its completion, and hands capable of arranging and digesting them in proper order."—*Edinburgh Weekly Chronicle, July* 25, 1827.

"It is not our intention to obtrude on our readers any elaborate details of Mr. Constable's progress in life and achievements as the most eminent bookseller that ever appeared in Scotland. But we cannot content ourselves with a mere formal notification of his death. We have known him personally and intimately for many years—before he rose from that humble grade in which he started—after he moved on the high tide of prosperity and influence in the literary world—and, latterly, when he lay on a bed of sickness, encompassed with the darkness that blighted fortunes shed around it—and we never knew him but in kindness. Mr. Constable's name is inseparably connected with one of the most brilliant periods of Scottish literature—and, but for him, several of its brightest luminaries might perhaps have been shorn of some beams. The princely munificence with which, in many cases, he requited the exertions of genius, raised him to the rank of a patron to men of letters, and attracted round him, for many years, an assemblage of authors, who have given a stamp and character to our times, which will not be obliterated while literature is cherished and the language of our country shall endure. He possessed an intuitive sagacity and a bold spirit of enterprise in all matters connected with his trade; and, if foibles and failings sometimes marred the aspect of his conduct, these must be lightly touched; for they were compensated by many acts of disinterested friendship and genuine liberality. The disasters which ultimately involved the affairs of his house in embarrassment, were to be ascribed, we willingly believe, rather to the vastness and

complexity of his undertakings, than to any want of probity or of exertion—and, if his speculations had not drawn him into the vortex, which periodically disturbs the current of mercantile affairs in this country, and which of late swept ruinously over the commercial world —they would, in all probability, have led to success as splendid as his projects were praiseworthy and magnificent. But, though his fortunes have been shipwrecked, and his health broken, and his happiness towards the close of life clouded by adversity, he was still cheered by the sympathy and kindness of many sincere friends, and he has left a name which will be long remembered as a benefactor to literature; an ambition which he ardently cherished through a long period of his life, and which remained unabated until all the visions of earthly ambition passed away from his eyes for ever."—*The Edinburgh Saturday Post, July* 28, 1827.

"Our paper of Thursday last contained, from a contemporary, a notice of the late Mr. Constable, which gave so just a view of his professional character, that little remains to be added. No one who was not personally acquainted with this eminent bookseller can fully appreciate his importance to the literature of Scotland, or the loss which it has sustained by his decease. He was the truest patron of literary merit that ever arose in this country, and his patronage drew after it no degrading dependence, as it merely consisted in the liberal payment of literary labour, by which he improved the condition of authors. He was entirely a practical man. He had great natural shrewdness and sagacity, and a keen and an intuitive perception, if we may so speak, of the selling qualities of books, which was really surprising. He accordingly saw what was to be made by literature. The spring-tide of knowledge, which has ever since flowed upon the country with such an irresistible stream, was just beginning to set in, when he commenced business; he had penetration to discern the growing taste of the community, and he resolved to deviate from the beaten track, of reprinting old works, into the more aspiring course of publishing what was original and new. That branch of the bookselling trade, it will be observed, which consists in the sale of old and standard works, is not so profitable nor inviting as that of an enterprising publisher, as it is open, like all other trades, to competition; whereas the vendor of new publications, if he chooses to purchase the right of property, has the exclusive right of selling them for a term of years. This trade, which is therefore a strict monopoly, and extremely profitable, when it is successful,

was scarcely known in Scotland prior to the publication of the Edinburgh Review; it centred almost entirely in the metropolis, the great mart of the national literature; and it was Mr. Constable who first began, on a great scale, this manufacture, if we may so call it, of new works in our Scottish metropolis. He had certainly all the qualities necessary for this difficult and hazardous branch of the business. He was enterprising, and he was liberal. He was not startled at ordinary difficulties; and when he was once resolved, he was keen and active in the prosecution of his objects. Nor was he in any degree grasping or narrow in his views. He did not grudge to those who had borne the toil a liberal share of the profit. He made a most fair division of the literary spoil; and he was thus the true Mecænas of Scotland—the real patron of our national literature—the convenient channel by which it was diffused in refreshing streams over the parched land of ignorance, and through which the return of profit naturally flowed back for the benefit of all concerned. A stimulus was thus given to literature; rising merit was fostered; and the whole community in this part of the island may be said to have received an impulse from this increased circulation of knowledge. The business of publishing is exposed to peculiar hazards. Mr. Constable in avoiding these had no guide but his own judgment. Nor was he accustomed to enter critically into the merits of literary works. This was not the bent of his mind,—yet he had a peculiar tact for ascertaining their value. He had a practical test of his own, by which he seldom failed to estimate accurately their worth in the market. He had no doubt continual opportunities of hearing critical discussions and remarks by the most eminent judges; and he was well qualified to profit by this species of instruction, and to turn it to account in his own line; though he never servilely followed any opinions of this sort. He patiently listened to all; but drew his own conclusions, and acted on his own views; and, conducted in this manner, the business of publishing was not one of mere haphazard, as it has frequently been. By far the greater part of Mr. Constable's publications, considered as commercial adventures, were judicious and fortunate. We need not mention the Edinburgh Review, which attained to the greatest circulation of any work of the same description, and gave an entirely new aspect to our periodical literature. Sir Walter Scott's Poems, and more especially the Waverley Novels, the publication of which formed an era in the history of the country, as containing the most faithful and interesting portrait anywhere to be found of our national manners now daily fading into oblivion, had a sale extensive beyond all former example; besides the

Supplement to the Encyclopædia, and various other works of less importance. Mr. Constable had a singular capacity to devise what was congenial to the public taste; and in fixing on even the most minute details he displayed equal anxiety and judgment. The last work which deeply engaged his attention, and which seemed to solace the hours of a long and painful illness, was his Miscellany; in sketching out the plan of this publication, and also in the different selections by which he contrived to render it so amusing, he frequently discovered, under the pressure of severe bodily suffering, a vigour of judgment, and a business-like discrimination, that was worthy of his best days. To Mr. Constable's misfortunes we forbear to allude, further than to say, that he had friends who did not abandon him in his adversity, and who continued to aid him in his views with a generosity which reflects upon them the highest honour."—*Edinburgh Evening Courant, July* 30, 1827.

"When a man like Mr. Constable dies a duty seems to devolve upon those whose circumstances may qualify for the task:—it is to recall to the recollection of his countrymen some of the leading features in the life and character of one who kept himself for so many years in the immediate eye of the public. To have it in one's power to bestow upon his talents, and the use he made of them, a just and liberal meed of praise, is at once soothing to the feelings of private friendship, and something like the discharge of a moral obligation on the part of the survivor. It is a trite remark that publishers make authors; and though it is perhaps equally true that the spirit of an age or a nation makes both, it certainly cannot be denied that a bookseller of enlightened understanding, extensive connexions, and great pecuniary resources, possesses an influence over the literature of his day, the extent of which it would be difficult to estimate. Such a bookseller was Mr. Constable. Before his time the literature, not only of Scotland, but to a certain degree even of England and Ireland, was never concentrated, as he contrived it should be, in the focus of Edinburgh; and, considering the recent disasters in the trade, we much fear that some time will elapse before a successor appear worthy of supplying the place which he has left vacant. To Mr. Constable belonged one of those enterprising and intelligent minds which would have distinguished him from the common herd, in whatever pursuit he might have chosen to engage. Fortunately, early habits and deep-rooted inclination fixed his attention on that which, above all others, gave scope for the exercise of his peculiar talents, and which, at the same time, by constituting him a

pioneer in the march of knowledge, placed in his hands a great and important trust. How well he redeemed that trust needs not to be told by us. Mr. Constable, from the first, was ambitious; but his ambition was of that higher and nobler kind which aims at self-exaltation, not upon the ruin, but the triumphant success of others. Proceeding constantly upon a principle so laudable, and guided always in his commercial transactions by the most comprehensive and honourable views, it will easily be believed that he frequently appeared far more anxious to extend the reputation of his country, by encouraging the genius to which it gave birth, than to aggrandize himself or advance his own interests. Even in the meridian of his power and popularity, when but to frequent his shop was looked upon as one of the prerogatives of a man of letters, he was never known to turn haughtily away, as some are but too apt to do, from the humble aspirant after literary fame; but, on the contrary, he delighted in singling out from the crowd such as merited that encouragement he was so able and willing to give. Nor was his liberality unrewarded. To say that it elicited talent surpassed in no period of the world's history, is but to repeat, in feeble terms, what the Waverley Novels, the Edinburgh Review, the Encyclopædia Britannica and its Supplement, have already proclaimed in characters of dazzling lustre. But even among these master spirits, whose minds have given to the age we live in 'its form and pressure,' Mr. Constable was ever respected and esteemed. He was not the mere man of business—the mere necessary tool in the hands of genius; he was the companion, the adviser, the friend. This, of itself, is no mean eulogium, and places him at once in a rank which few, perhaps none, of his brethren have yet attained. Whilst in public, his conduct was ever marked by the most scrupulous attention to the open, generous, and honourable dealing of a 'royal merchant;' he was in private not more characterized by his easy and affable manner, than by his gentlemanly and dignified deportment.

"The failure of the house of Messrs. Constable and Co. was one of those accidents to which all great mercantile concerns are subject. The affairs of the Edinburgh branch were too deeply intermingled with those of the house in London to be able to survive its downfall. The astonishment and regret excited by this event—feelings which have hardly yet subsided—may be looked upon as some criterion by which to judge of the extent of that prosperity which was so suddenly overthrown. But Mr. Constable retired from business, if not with that éclat and splendour which his exertions ought to have secured for him, at least with that unsullied reputation and conscious integrity

which are the best companions of adversity. 'It was not in his power to *command* uninterrupted success; but he did all that man *can* do—he *deserved* it. It is a more melancholy consideration, that a long protracted course of ill-health should have embittered his last days, and shut him out not only from the world, but even from most of his friends. His complaints were of a confirmed dropsical nature, and though anxious to struggle against them, the disease was too powerful. "Even under its pressure, however, his mind was not inactive. The extensive and admirably conceived arrangements he saw it necessary to make preparatory to the publication of his Miscellany—a work which, for its utility in the dissemination of useful knowledge, holds the first rank among the publications of the day—reflect upon his memory the highest honour, and, we doubt not, will long continue a living record of his abilities. It gives us much pleasure to understand that the Miscellany is to be carried on under the same auspices as formerly, for the benefit of his family, and besides the claim which its own intrinsic merits gives it upon public attention, we are certain that, if anything could enhance that claim, it would be the desire which must be universally felt to pay a tribute of respect to his memory in the most agreeable of all ways—by adding to the comforts of his nearest surviving relatives. Mr. Constable's death, though not unexpected, was sudden; and was occasioned, not, as has been erroneously stated by a contemporary, by the bursting of a blood-vessel, but by the pressure of water on his chest. 'He was buried in the Old Calton Burying-ground, and his funeral was numerously and most respectably attended. But one feeling seeming to pervade all present, that they had lost a friend, and his country a benefactor.—H. G. B."—*Edinburgh Observer*, *July* 31, 1827.

"In our last, it was our melancholy duty to announce the death of Mr. Constable, the celebrated Edinburgh publisher and bookseller. This gentleman's name had been so closely, and in so distinguished a manner, identified with British Literature during the last quarter of a century, that every event which befell him became matter of prominent interest—particularly since, 'fallen from his high estate,' the cloud that dimmed the evening of his life first descended upon his prospects. The interest of which Mr. Constable thus became the object was by no means the result of those adventitious circumstances that often, by unlooked-for combinations, elevate into influence and notice individuals whose merits entitle them only to an obscurity deeper in degree than that of their fellows. His correct appreciation of public taste

and feeling, his discernment of literary talent, and his enterprising liberality in directing and rewarding its exertions—these were the means by which he procured his distinction, and these also were the means by which he retained it. Previous to his advent—if we may so use the term—Edinburgh held but an insignificant rank as a publishing city and a mart for literary talent. Every author who aspired to general fame and standard respectability, printed and published his works in London, and to that point also he looked for the critical verdict that should smooth his way to immortality, or consign him to oblivion. The establishment by Mr. Constable of the Edinburgh Review effected a speedy change in these two particulars. The genius with which Scotland abounded at once raised its voice in the metropolis of its own country, and assumed 'divided empire' with that of the metropolis of England. Publication followed in the train of criticism; and the appearance of the Encyclopædia Britannica at length fully established the character and independence of Edinburgh literature. The subsequent publication of the Supplement, the Waverley Novels, and, more recently, of the Miscellany, perpetuated and still farther enhanced that character and independence; and for these reasons Edinburgh is, and long has been, equally eligible with London as a place of publication, and perhaps more formidable than the latter as a place of refined and enlightened criticism.

"To this ultimate result others besides Mr. Constable have no doubt contributed—but merely, however, in a secondary degree. To Mr. Constable belongs the merit of having first explored and rendered the path easy, and with everything brilliant and masterly in the publishing department in Edinburgh during his career is his name pre-eminently associated. We stop not here to notice the invidious remark which of late has obtained such general currency—that Mr. Constable, by carrying speculation beyond the bounds of prudence, induced a literary plethora, which, in its evil consequences, ultimately counterbalanced the good that preceded it. This fallacy is of itself too transparent to require to be held up for detection between the eye of reason and the light of truth; but even were it otherwise, could the extravagance of others in pushing to an extreme a first impulse, be justly charged on the person by whom that first impulse was communicated? Peace to the manes of Archibald Constable! If he erred, he did so as a generous spirit errs—on the side of liberality. The indigence in which he died is the best witness of his integrity, and the respect which, in his misfortunes, continued to be paid to him by all classes, demonstrates how uniform on this point were the

thoughts of the public. On commencing his Miscellany, many talented individuals—some actuated by gratitude, some by generous sympathy—came forward to support him in his undertaking, and thus, while they proved the esteem in which he was held by those best acquainted with his conduct, an opportunity was afforded of likewise ascertaining the sentiments of the literary world in general; and never was an expression of public sentiment more honourable, if we may judge from the extensive circulation which the Miscellany immediately obtained and has always commanded. Among the individuals who thus came forward to support Mr. Constable, as above stated, it would be injustice to pass over the name of Captain Basil Hall, the celebrated author of Voyages to Loo-Choo and South America. This gentleman, to his lasting honour, presented Mr. Constable with the copyright of his admirable works, valued at one thousand pounds sterling; and to these was no doubt owing much of that high *status* which the Miscellany obtained immediately on its appearance. This act of Captain Hall will be remembered so long as high-minded generosity shall find an admirer, and in the biography of Constable, which we hope to see ere long attempted, it will form an incident not less honourable to him who received, than to him who bestowed, the kindness.

"We learn with very sincere pleasure that the Miscellany, notwithstanding the death of its lamented projector, is still to be continued for the benefit of his family. The intrinsic merit of the work itself fully insures its continued success; but were any other circumstance necessary to this effect, no one could be so influential as the melancholy fact, that, after more than thirty years of enterprise and unwearied exertion, this was the only legacy which Mr. Constable possessed the power of bequeathing to his wife and children."—*Glasgow Free Press*, *July* 28, 1827.

APPENDIX No. II.

THE following genealogical memoranda preceded the scrap of autobiography which will be found at the beginning of the first volume of the present work. They were taken down from my father's dictation in 1821. My brother David, who was amanuensis on the occasion, has appended to the family details the following sentences:—"I have many certified notices from Parish Registers of my father's predecessors *in Fife*, which carry up the settlement of persons of the name of Constable (who had evidently come from Yorkshire) to an entry which Lamont of Newton has made in his diary in June 1649,[1]—'Andro Lawmonthe returned from England, wha tolde that his eldest sister, Janet L., was maried upon a minister in Yorkshyre, called Mr. Constable, as also, that his uncle, Mr. Walter, was maried with ane olde gentellwoman therby.' My own opinion is that those of the name who settled at that time in Fife were the children of Sir W. Constable, who was attainted *after his death* as a regicide; but it would require some investigation of registers in Yorkshire to settle that point. I know upon good authority that my father's name and my own are in the entail of an estate in Yorkshire."

My father's memoranda are as follows:—"John Constable and Isobel Green, his wife, who resided at Kincaple, had a son, John Constable, born there in 1641, as will be found in the Register of Baptisms of St. Andrews. I always understood these parties to be the first of the name in Scotland,[2] and to have come from the neighbourhood of Hull, in Yorkshire. They were nearly related, I believe, to the Rev. Mr. Constable mentioned in The Chronicle of Fife, who married one of the Lamonts of Newton, as will be seen by reference to that work.

"John Constable was educated at the University of St. Andrews, and was a person of considerable note in his day. The late George

[1] See The Chronicle of Fife, p. 6. 4to. Edinburgh, 1810.

[2] There is in my possession a copy of the Testament of Johnne Constable, a burgess of Dundee, dated 8th February 1593.—T. C.

Constable of Wallace Craigie—an intimate crony and friend of my granduncle, Charles Constable of Peelwells and Moorhall, who counted kindred with each other as second cousins—possessed a portrait of him, which he told me had been placed in his hands as a relation, by two old ladies who were daughters (or granddaughters) of the said John Constable. It is now in the possession of Miss Constable of Dundee, who calls it a portrait of Sir John Constable. There must be some mistake in this statement, which I have often wished to ascertain and rectify, and which, perhaps, the death of Mr. George Constable, which occurred in 1803, alone prevented.

"George Constable, who was a writer in Edinburgh, and lived to a considerable age, was a very worthy old gentleman, and entailed an estate of his own acquisition on the family of his sister, Mrs. Brown, who now enjoy it, and take the name of Constable. He is the individual whom the author of The Antiquary had in his eye as Jonathan Oldbuck. I possess a curious full-length drawing of him by Kay, and in my early life it was my delight and good fortune to pass much time with him during his visits to Edinburgh. With his nephews in the male line I have always been on terms of friendship and intimacy. They were, the Rev. Thomas Constable, minister of Liff, near Dundee, who died in April 1817; George Constable, Colonel in the Bengal Artillery (Captain Macintyre of The Antiquary), an excellent man, who ranks high in his profession; and James Constable, for many years a surgeon in Jamaica. These have several sisters now living (1821). Colonel George Constable has a son and daughter. The son is in India, and is the only male branch of the family; he is, I believe, illegitimate. William Constable, watchmaker in Dundee, who has many children, and is a most excellent man, is a not distant relation of this family.

"John Constable (born in 1641) was the father of John Constable, who married, at Leuchars, Euphemia Ross, his first wife, who bore to him, January 29, 1698, John Constable, my grandfather. His father, who resided at Leuchars, I always understood to be the grandson of the individual whose portrait has been mentioned. I have no documents in my possession, but by means of records and otherwise it may be ascertained, and may hereafter be an object of my inquiry. I visited an old lady, my grandaunt, at Leuchars, about the year 1785, who entertained me with many family anecdotes. Her father had been a man of inventive genius, and had devised some new piece of machinery, used, I think, in corn-mills. From the parish records it appears that he was also a leader in Church matters, often member of

Presbytery in the General Assembly, and on one occasion (1707) representing the Presbytery of Cupar in the settlement of a Mr. Robertson as minister of the parish of Leuchars. His commission on that occasion is in my possession. He was a well-educated man. My grandfather having been his eldest son, I am his representative.

"My greatgrandfather married a second time, Ann Robertson, who bore him five sons and three daughters. Charles, the fourth son, born in 1714, was bred a farmer, and settled in Berwickshire, where he acquired the estates of Feelwells and Moorhall, and was the first who introduced modern improvements in agriculture in that county. One of his estates—both of which he had planted and improved—he sold in his lifetime, the other descended to his son, the late John Constable of Moorhall.

"My grandfather, eldest son of John Constable of Leuchars, also bred a farmer, settled at Arncroach, in the parish of Carnbee. He was twice married,—first, on May 12, 1721, to Elizabeth Hean, who had no family, and second, to Margaret Bisset, who bore him four sons, three of whom died young. Thomas, born in 1737, was my father,[1] who married, in the year 1762, Elizabeth Myles, daughter of John Myles, farmer at East Pitcorthy, and granddaughter of the minister of Flisk. Of their seven children I am the only known survivor."

[1] A short notice of him will be found in a note at page 4 of vol. i.

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